

Hafa Adai!

13 new citizens naturalized in observance of Covenant Day. **PAGE 2**
'US gov't policies threaten way of life in US Pacific.' **PAGE 10**

\$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 62

www.saipantribune.com

WEDNESDAY MARCH 27, 2024

www.facebook.com/saipantribune

IPI to file TRO again

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Chi

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC is in the process of filing another motion for a temporary restraining

» **In bid to halt casino license revocation deliberations**

order to stop the Commonwealth Casino Commission board members from deliberating and deciding by next week

whether or not to revoke IPI's exclusive casino license.

See IPI on Page 4

AS BOOST PROBE CONTINUES

Vote expected on possible call for Taisague

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

tor Jesus Taisague and others to testify.



Propst

The House of Representatives ad-hoc committee that is investigating the previous administration's Building Optimism, Opportunities, and Stability Together, or BOOST program, is expected to vote tomorrow, Thursday, whether or not to summon former Department of Commerce Economic Development direc-

House majority leader Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan), who is acting chair of the Special Committee on Federal Assistance & Disaster-Related Funding, set a committee meeting for tomorrow at 1:30pm in the House chamber. On the meeting's agenda is the subpoena for Taisague, who partly owns Elite Group LLC,

See VOTE on Page 4

Inmate found in possession of 'ice'

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A Department of Corrections inmate was recently found in possession of methamphetamine in her cell during a cell search conducted by one of the officers.

Inmate Abigail Renee Duenas was allegedly caught in possession of methamphetamine in her cell at DOC following a cell search over a week ago.

See INMATE on Page 4

Ship hits Baltimore bridge, bringing it down; at least 7 people believed to be in the water



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

The vessel *Zhen Hua 13*, carrying four giant shipping cranes for delivery and installation at the Port of Baltimore, passes under the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, Wednesday, June 20, 2012.

BALTIMORE (AP)—A major bridge in Baltimore snapped and collapsed after a container ship rammed into it early Tuesday, and several vehicles fell into the river below. Rescuers were searching for at least seven people in the water.

The vessel appears to have hit one of the supports of the Francis Scott Key Bridge.

See SHIP on Page 4



80TH ANNIVERSARY

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang signed a proclamation recognizing the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Saipan and Tinian last Friday at the Aqua Resort Club in Achugao.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

INSIDE



LOCAL

NMC presents Angela Nicole De Guzman Borlongan as the featured AHEC scholar.

PAGE 5



WORLD

Russia launched missiles against Kyiv for the third time in five days and targeted other regions.

PAGE 11



LIFE & STYLE

Two properties belonging to Sean "Diddy" Combs are searched by federal agents.

PAGE 12



SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.



GOT A NEWS TIP?

TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440

FAX: 235-3740

EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

13 new citizens naturalized in observance of Covenant Day

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI swore in 13 new U.S. citizens in a special Covenant Day naturalization ceremony yesterday.

The newly naturalized citizens are Ignacio Quilang Achas, Roderick Ramos Capili, Daryll Mojica de Luna, Emily Jaramillo Faustino, Lourdes Pajarillo Garcia, Armando Cula Garote, Remedios Montuerto Garote, Daisylyn Reyes Ogo, Monica Recto Pangilinan, Piocardo Laureano Pangilinan, Carmelita Bulatao Sandig, Rodel Tanedo Villaluna, and Virginia Grajo Villaluna.

In observance of Covenant Day, yesterday's naturalized citizens heard a special speech from one of the CNMI's founding fathers, Covenant negotiator Pedro "Pete" Tenorio, who shared his own personal journey to becoming a naturalized citizen.

"Like you, I am a naturalized citizen by virtue of our Covenant with the United States. As a child growing up



KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

The U.S. District Court for the NMI swore in 13 new U.S. citizens in a special Covenant Day naturalization ceremony yesterday.

after the war, I picked through the wreckage of World War II, accompanied by adults who scrounged for materials to rebuild our lives flattened by bombs, armament, and fires. In the aftermath I attended elementary school in Chalan

Kanoa village, and intermediate school near San Antonio. With the full support of family and friends, I left Saipan at a young age of 16 to attend high schools abroad, and eventually I attended the University of Hawaii where I graduated with

a bachelor and two master's degrees. I was a Covenant negotiator and a founding father of the CNMI Commonwealth with the United States. [I] also managed to be elected lieutenant governor and Washington resident

representative for a total of eight years to each elected office. Many of you will have had or will have similar experiences. The United States offers opportunity no matter who you are or where you are from," he said.

Tenorio touched on the importance of the Covenant and its significance in shaping the Commonwealth as we know it today.

"The reason you are being sworn in as U.S. citizens here today is the result of our negotiations on a document known as the Covenant, a political status agreement that estab-

lished a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America," he said.

Tenorio said the Covenant essentially provided the people of the Commonwealth the opportunity to become naturalized U.S. citizens.

"Our Covenant is one of a kind. It took several years to negotiate terms and conditions with the United States. It was put to a vote in a plebiscite after being scrutinized and debated by our people. After a supermajority approval of 78.8% by our people, it was referred to the U.S. Congress for enactment into U.S. public law, which was historically signed by U.S. President Gerald Ford on March 24, 1976, almost 50 years ago. The Covenant provided our people with the opportunity to be naturalized U.S. citizens," he said.

"We are a melting pot or a mixed salad of backgrounds from over 190 countries, many religions, cultures, and beliefs, but we come to live in a country committed to strive for equality, justice, and the protection of essential rights for all its peoples. This is the promise of an American citizenship. It is more than ease of travel with a blue passport or federal subsidies. It is the ticket to live your life to the fullest of your potential, and to grasp opportunity with confidence the institutions will hold for you," Tenorio added.



RACE 2 RAISE ELEM SCHOOLS

Support your favorite public elementary school!

The schools with the most
receipts will win up to

\$5,000 CASH

March 11 - April 9

Scan for more
details and results


















ARTMAN CORPORATION

**SERVICES
will be:**

- Sewer Pumping
- Snake Wiring
- Portable Toilet Rental
- Portable Hand Wash Station
- Handling Recyclable Wastes



PMB 122 Box 10000
MP 96950, Lower Base
artmancorporation@gmail.com
Please Call: 234-8079 | 287-8079

Kintol to keynote SBDC business summit's morning session

As cyberattacks continue to escalate, particularly affecting critical government agencies and businesses in the Marianas, the call for proactive action to implement robust cybersecurity measures has never been more apparent, and more urgent.

In light of this pressing need, the CNMI Small Business Development Center Network is honored to announce Herman M. Kintol, owner of KRS Cyberworx, a leading cybersecurity firm, as its distinguished speaker for the morning general session at the upcoming 2024 Friends of Business: Cybertech Edition Summit. The event will take place on Thursday, April 4, 2024 at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan from 8am to 5pm.

Registration will close on Wednesday, March 27, 2024 or when we've reached our maximum capacity.

Kintol, who is scheduled to present on "Understanding Cybersecurity Defense: Mitigating Risks on the Offense," brings over 14 years of extensive experience in the tech space to the table. His cybersecurity and project management expertise are poised to offer invaluable insights into the intricacies of cybersecurity defense, particularly tailored to best practices for individuals seeking to fortify their defenses against cyber threats at minimal cost.

Key highlights:

1. Rising cybersecurity threats: Recent cyberattacks targeting small businesses in the Marianas have underscored the critical importance of cybersecurity defense. Many small businesses, often primary targets, remain unaware of the det-

rimonental effects of cyberattacks or are unsure of where to begin in improving their cybersecurity posture.

2. Mitigating cyber risks: During the morning session, Kintol will delve into methodologies for reducing cybersecurity risks within both professional and small business environments. Attendees can expect to gain practical insights derived from recommendations by leading security organizations, outlining simple and affordable steps to bolstering their cybersecurity programs.

3. Immediate action required: With cyberattacks such as phishing and ransomware posing significant threats, attendees will be equipped with the latest cyber-

security trends and actionable strategies to safeguard their businesses and themselves as individuals who consider themselves avid internet users. It is imperative for small businesses to take proactive measures to protect themselves, especially as insurance companies increasingly require cybersecurity diligence for policy issuance.

Kintol has over 14 years of experience working in the tech space, including IT network administration, cybersecurity management and technical project management.

Prior to rejoining the private sector, Kintol was the IT and Communications manager and the Statewide Interoperability coordinator under the CNMI Office of

Homeland Security & Emergency Management.

During his time with HSEM, he completed the agency's first Nationwide Cybersecurity Review through the Center for Internet Security and Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center.

Kintol is certified across the following globally-recognized organizations: ISC2, CompTIA and CISCO where he holds the following professional certifications: ISC2 CISSP, CompTIA A+, Network+, Security+, Cisco CCNA, CCNP, and CCNA Security.

Kintol is proud to be part of the company behind developing the CNMI's first CyberSecurity Incident Response Plan for one of the CNMI's most critical government agencies. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Information Systems Security with ITT Technical

Institute out of Boise, Idaho.

Fun Fact: Kintol serves on the Saipan Baseball League's board of directors, and is the current CNMI's secretary general to the World Baseball Softball Confederation Oceania.

"We are honored to have Herman Kintol as our keynote speaker for the morning general session," said Mercyllyn Kaneshi Palec, associate network director at the CNMI Small Business Development Center Network. "His wealth of experience and expertise will undoubtedly provide invaluable insights into navigating the complex landscape of

cybersecurity defense, particularly tailored to the needs of those in leadership roles who can take proactive stances against cyberattacks."

To learn more and register for the 2024 Friends of Business Summit Cybertech Edition, contact (670) 237-688 or email at cnmisbdc@marianas.edu. (PR)



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Tel: (670) 664-2371 | Fax: (670) 664-2408 | Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP24-GOV-42400067: PROVISION OF LABOR, MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE MONITORING SERVICES FOR THE POST-CLOSURE MAINTENANCE OF THE PUERTO RICO DUMPSITE

SUBMISSION DATE: 10:00 AM ChST APRIL 19, 2024

Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), are soliciting sealed proposals for the Provision of Labor, Materials and Equipment for the Monitoring Services for the Post-Closure Maintenance of the Puerto Rico Dumpsite funded through the 702 Covenant funding by the Office of Insular Affairs, US Department of Interior.

The project package will be available in digital format only beginning **March 20, 2024** at the Capital Improvement Program Office, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building in Capitol Hill, Saipan, during regular working hours or online at Vendor Self Service (selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/Vendors/VBids). Proposals must precisely follow the submittal requirements identified in the Scope of Work.

A Pre-Proposal Meeting will be held via Google Meet at **10:00 AM on April 4, 2024**. Questions regarding this RFP may be submitted via email to Ms. Skalan V. Yamada at skalam.v.yamada@gmail.com no later than **4:00 PM ChST April 11, 2024**. All Questions & Answers will be shared with all prospective proposers.

Proposers located outside of the CNMI must fill out and submit the Notice of Intent Form to the Acting Director of Procurement Services no later than **10:00 AM ChST, April 19, 2024**.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria: (1) Qualifications and experience on similar projects - 30%; (2) Past performance with CNMI projects - 30%; and (3) Cost - 40%.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS, AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

/s/ Arnold I. Palacios
Governor, CNMI

/s/ Brian S. Nicholas Jr., Acting Director
CNMI Procurement Services

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

POSITION TITLE:
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATUS:
PERMANENT-EXEMPT

SUPERVISED BY:
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

POSITIONS SUPERVISED:
ALL EMPLOYEES

OPEN DATE: MARCH 27, 2024

The Executive Director is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the CCA ensuring quality services, advocacy, solid financials, community education, public relations, and fundraising. The Executive Director works closely with the seven members of the Board of Directors and assists both board and CCA committees as needed. The Executive Director assumes the primary leadership role for the CCA.

HOW TO APPLY:

Submit your resume by emailing a PDF to Ms. Lynn F. Tenorio, CCA Interim Executive Director, at ltenorio.cca@gmail.com.

Copies of the position description are available at the CCA Office located in Marina Heights Bldg. 1, Suite 104, on Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Puerto Rico, Saipan. Office hours are Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., (670) 682-0051/2.

Bank of Hawai'i Corporation			
BANK OF HAWAII CORPORATION AND SUBSIDIARIES CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION			
At the Close of Business December 31, 2023 (dollars in thousands)			
ASSETS		LIABILITIES AND SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY	
Interest-Bearing Deposits in Other Banks	\$ 2,761	Deposits	\$ 21,055,045
Funds Sold	690,112	Securities Sold Under	
Investment Securities	7,406,268	Agreements to Repurchase	150,490
Loans Held for Sale	3,124	Other Debt	560,190
Loans and Leases	13,965,026	Operating Lease Liabilities	94,693
Allowance for Credit Losses	(146,403)	Retirement Benefits Payable	23,673
Net Loans and Leases	13,818,623	Accrued Interest Payable	41,023
		Taxes Payable and Deferred Taxes	7,636
		Other Liabilities	386,304
TOTAL EARNING ASSETS	21,920,888		
		TOTAL LIABILITIES	22,319,054
Cash and Due From Banks	308,071	Shareholders' Equity	
Premises and Equipment, Net	194,855	Preferred Stock	180,000
Operating Lease Right-of-Use Assets	86,110	Common Stock	583
Accrued Interest Receivable	66,525	Capital Surplus	636,422
Foreclosed Real Estate	2,098	Accumulated Other	
Mortgage Servicing Rights	20,880	Comprehensive Loss	(396,688)
Goodwill	31,517	Retained Earnings	2,107,569
Bank-Owned Life Insurance	462,894	Treasury Stock, at Cost	(1,113,644)
Other Assets	639,458		
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 23,733,296	TOTAL SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY	1,414,242
		TOTAL LIABILITIES AND SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY	\$ 23,733,296

BANK OF HAWAII - SAIPAN STATEMENT OF CONDITION			
At the Close of Business December 31, 2023 (dollars in thousands)			
ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Loans	\$ 44,783	Deposits	\$ 179,761
Allowance for Credit Losses	(1,060)	Operating Lease Liabilities	285
Net Loans	43,723	Accrued Interest Payable	463
Cash	1,955	Other Liabilities	20
Premises and Equipment, Net	320		
Operating Lease Right-of-Use Assets	285	TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 180,529
Accrued Interest Receivable	129		
Due from Head Office	132,665		
Other Assets	1,452		
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 180,529		

The audit reports of Bank of Hawai'i Corporation and Bank of Hawai'i - Saipan Branch are available for public review at the Office of the Director of Banking, Department of Commerce, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

MEMBER FDIC © 2024 Bank of Hawai'i Corporation is a trade name of Bank of Hawai'i Corporation. Bank of Hawai'i does Bank of Hawai'i.

General Contractor

PUBLIC NOTICE

Attention Residents and Commuters: Extended Working Hours at Route 33 Project Ph.2, 3&4.

Please be advised that the road project taking place along Beach Road (from Gold Ribbon to American Memorial Park) will be extending its working hours from 6:00 AM to 4:00 AM in the morning, effective immediately.

This extension is necessary to expedite the completion of the project and minimize disruptions to the community. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding and cooperation during this period.

For any inquiries or concerns regarding the extended working hours, please contact +1670-483-7172 or +1670-789-1742.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation.

Sincerely,
GPPC Inc.
Management

'I attended PELP seminar as contributing community member'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Former Department of Public Safety commissioner Clement R. Bermudes said yesterday he attended the Pacific Executive Leaders Program in Hawaii last March 4 to 8 as a "contributing member of the community."

Bermudes said he applied last year for the PELP seminar

and was selected twice prior to resigning the position of DPS commissioner last Jan. 26.

He said he deferred the first time for May 2023 due to the typhoon, then reapplied for 2024.

"My selection clearly was based upon my extensive experience in emergency management, leadership skills, education and training," said the retired U.S. Army lieu-

tenant colonel.

Since Bermudes had already resigned as DPS commissioner last Jan. 26, his attendance at the weeklong PELP seminar came as a surprise to some of the CNMI delegation.

The seminar, which was held at the 'Imiloa Astronomy Center of the University of Hawaii at Hilo, was sponsored by the Center for Homeland Defense and Security, and Fed-

eral Emergency Management Agency. The CNMI did not incur any expense for that event.

CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management special assistant Franklin Babauta, who was among four members of the CNMI delegation at the seminar, said on Monday that they were surprised to see Bermudes at the event, but he did not ask Bermudes why he was there

and that he believes the others from Saipan also did not ask him the same question.

Babauta believes the PELP already knew about Bermudes' status because they changed his title on the table from "commissioner" to "LTC Army, retired."

To participate in the seminar, one should first be invited as a CNMI government employee.

A former government official who requested not be identified told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that FEMA chooses the PELP participants, including those from non-government organizations and the private sector; the PELP website made that clear.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

SHRM CNMI Chapter meeting to highlight UCEDDS

The CNMI Chapter of the Society for Human Resources Management will host a general membership meeting on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at the Tropicana Restaurant of Grandvrio Resort starting at 8:30am. Doors will open at 8am.

This month's meeting will delve into a crucial topic in the local workforce—services and support for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, facilitated by Northern Marianas College.

The session aims to provide valuable insights into the University Center in Excellence on Developmental Disabilities program's significance, impact, and services.

Highlighting the event is guest speaker Eileen Alepuyo Babauta, UCEDD program director at NMC. With a wealth of experience and expertise in the field, Babauta is poised to deliver a comprehensive overview of UCEDD, shedding light on its key features, suc-

cess stories, and ways in which it contributes to the growth of the CNMI workforce.

The following fees apply: \$40 for SHRM members and \$45 for non-members.

To register, sign up at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeX5BfZrxAbQx-BGH7NTAKjCmC2SRvw_GVEhBfcz2uVLfM-L-A/viewform

This meeting will include breakfast. Seating is limited and by submitting this form

you are confirming your attendance on Thursday, March 28.

SHRM is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. It serves the needs of HR professionals and advances the interests of the HR profession. Founded in 1948, SHRM has more than 250,000 members in over 140 countries, and more than 575 affiliated chapters. The CNMI Chapter is affiliated with the national organization. (PR)

SHIP

From page 1

causing the roadway to break apart in several places and plunge into the water, according to a video posted on X, formerly known as Twitter. The ship caught fire, and thick, black smoke billowed out of it.

"This is a dire emergency," Kevin Cartwright, director of communications for the Baltimore Fire Department, told The Associated Press. "Our focus right

now is trying to rescue and recover these people."

Emergency responders were searching for at least seven people believed to be in the water, Cartwright said, though he said it's too early to know how many people were affected. He called the collapse a "developing mass casualty event."

He added that some cargo appeared to be dangling from the bridge, which spans the Patapsco River, a vital artery that along with the Port of Baltimore is a hub for shipping on the East Coast. Opened in

1977, the bridge is named for the writer of "The Star-Spanned Banner."

Agencies received emergency calls around 1:30 a.m. reporting that a ship leaving Baltimore had struck a column on the bridge, according to Cartwright. Several vehicles were on the bridge at the time, including one the size of a tractor-trailer truck.

He said the ship was called "Dali." A ship but that name was headed through Baltimore to Colombo, Sri Lanka, as its final destination, according to Marine Traffic and

Vessel Finder. The ship was flying under a Singapore flag, WTOP radio station reported, citing petty officer Matthew West from the Coast Guard in Baltimore.

Mayor Brandon M. Scott and Baltimore County Executive Johnny Olszewski Jr. posted that emergency personnel were responding and rescue efforts were underway.

"All lanes closed both directions for incident on I-695 Key Bridge. Traffic is being detoured," the Maryland Transportation Authority posted on X.

VOTE

From page 1

which does business as Lovebirds Restaurant on Tinian.

Taisague, who served as a member of the BOOST program review panel, testified before a joint House committee in December 2022 that he indirectly benefitted from the program, with businesses he partly owns receiving over \$1.2 million.

He said he had recused himself from the review panel when the businesses he partly owns submitted the BOOST applications.

Also on the agenda is the subpoena for "Alexandria" Yuan Jing to testify. Jing is reportedly part-owner of Elite Group LLC and owns Flower Tea House, Saipan Goddess, and Saipan Horse Course.

According to the BOOST program ledger, Flower Tea

House received \$125,000, Saipan Goddess got \$125,000, Saipan Horse Course in Kagman obtained \$200,000, Sakura received \$50,000, and Elite Group LLC's Love Birds Restaurant got \$125,000 and another \$100,000.

Also on the agenda is a subpoena for Kevin C. Guerrero, of COVID-Care Force Micronesia and Saipan Renal Care, to testify before the special committee. COVID-Care Force

Micronesia reportedly received \$150,000, while Saipan Renal Care was awarded \$150,000, according to the ledger.

Also on the meeting's agenda is for committee members to vote whether to request or not House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) to certify the statement of contempt against former Finance secretary Atalig and send it to the attorney general for prosecution in Superior Court.

IPI

From page 1

In response to *Saipan Tribune's* inquiry, IPI director/manager Howyo Chi disclosed yesterday that their lawyer, Michael Chen, is working on the TRO motion, which will be filed today, Wednesday, before the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

"Due process violations are going to be our strongest grounds for TRO," Chi said. He did not elaborate.

CCC board chair Edward

C. DeLeon Guerrero has set the board's regular monthly meeting tomorrow, Thursday, at 10:30am, in the CCC conference room at the Springs Plaza building in Gualo Rai. The meeting's agenda includes the board's deliberation and decision scheduled for Tuesday next week pertaining to IPI's casino license revocation hearing.

CCC board vice chair Rafael S. Demapan and commissioners Ramon M. Dela Cruz, Mariano Taitano, and Martin T. Mendiola are serving as judges in the revocation hear-

ing. DeLeon Guerrero recused himself from the hearing.

IPI and CCC executive director Andrew Yeom, through their lawyers, completed their closing arguments last March 1 after a three-day hearing.

After the closing arguments, Demapan said they are going to hold a public meeting within 30 days, in which the commissioners are also going to deliberate and members of the public will be allowed to speak.

In Yeom's closing arguments, assistant attorney general Keisha Blaise, who was

the counsel for the CCC at the time, stated, among other things, that, as the commissioners deliberated on the revocation of IPI casino license fee for its failure to pay the \$3-million casino regulatory fee, it is imperative that they maintain their focus on the central issue at hand—compliance with statutory and regulatory obligations.

In IPI's closing arguments, Chen asserted, among other things, that the \$3-million regulatory fee that the CCC is asking for has several constitutional issues.

Rudnysky to hold final concert tonight

Renowned classical pianist Roman Rudnysky, who has entertained the CNMI and worked with our students almost annually, will perform his second and final concert today, March 27, at 7pm at the Grace Christian Academy.

There is no entrance fee for the concert; contributions will be accepted and appreciated.

This is Rudnysky's 13th trip to the CNMI. The Friends of the Arts, with the help of sponsors, are hosting Rud-

nytsky's stay.

Rudnysky is an internationally active concert pianist of Ukrainian back-

ground whose frequent performances take him all over the world—to every continent and places in-between. A graduate of the famous Juilliard School in New York, he also did additional studies at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, Maryland and in master classes in Austria (the "Mozartium") and Italy. (PR)



Rudnysky

INMATE

From page 1

Duenas, 25, is facing charges of illegal possession and bringing contraband into a prison.

Following a bail hearing last week in Superior Court, a \$5,000 bail was imposed on Duenas before she was remanded back to Department of Corrections custody.

Duenas was ordered to return to court today, March 27, for a preliminary hearing while her arraignment is set for April 1.

According to court documents, Department of Public Safety Central received a call from DOC's Internal Affairs officer Lianna Quitugua on Monday, March 4, at around 2:39pm, who reported an illegal possession incident. At around 2:46pm that same day, police officer Bradford Peter arrived at DOC and met with Quitugua.

According to Quitugua, DOC officer Shaina Rios was conducting a cell search in the female unit, Pod-3 Section-C, when she discovered a clear Ziploc baggie containing a crystal-like substance. Quitugua noted that the baggie was concealed within a paper hidden inside a bra-strap within Duenas' cellblock.

Quitugua said she tested the substance in the baggie using the Narcotics Identification Kit, which resulted in a presumptive positive result for the presence of methamphetamine.

At around 7:32pm that same day, DPS officers arrived at DOC and met with Duenas for an interview.

According to Duenas, she entered DOC on Feb. 9, for charges of theft and was released on Feb. 24. She was scheduled to return to DOC on Feb. 29 to start her sentence.

However, Duenas claims that before she was released on Feb. 24, she was allegedly approached by her fellow inmates, Liva Fitial and Shaina Castro, who knew that she would be returning on Feb. 29.

Duenas claims Fitial and Castro instructed her to smuggle methamphetamine for them when she returns. Duenas claims she was afraid of Fitial and Castro so she agreed to do what they demanded.

Duenas also told police that when she was released from prison, she contacted her brother-in-law and asked him for meth.

On Thursday, Feb. 28, Duenas said her brother-in-law handed her a clear Ziploc baggie containing a white crystal-like substance at her home in Papago.

On Feb. 29, when she arrived at DOC, Duenas said she hid the Ziploc baggie in her underwear. Duenas noted that the officer that searched her upon entering DOC did not see it.

Duenas claims said she was unable to hand over the Ziploc baggie to Fitial or Castro when she arrived as they were in a different section.

Duenas claims she continued to hide the Ziploc baggie in her cell until March 4 when Rios conducted a cell search. Duenas added that she approached the officer herself and admitted she had drugs in her cell and that's how Rios found the drugs.

NATIONAL AHEC WEEK

NMC highlights AHEC scholar Angela Borlongan

The week of March 25-29, 2024, marks National Area Health Education Center week, during which Northern Marianas College will highlight its AHEC scholars. These scholars are currently pursuing studies to become registered nurses, aiming to bolster the local healthcare workforce and contribute to the community of CNMI.

NMC proudly presents Angela Nicole De Guzman Borlongan, a second-year Nursing student, as the featured Area Health Education Center scholar for 2024 National AHEC Week.

As an AHEC scholar, Borlongan has gone above and beyond in her academic pursuits. Over the past two years, she's gained valuable experience by diligently completing 80 hours of clinical training and enriching her theoretical foundation through 80 hours of didactic education focused on emerging healthcare topics. These topics include Interprofessional Education, Behavioral Health Integration, Social Determinants of Health, Cultural Competency, Practice Transformation, Virtual Learning and Telehealth, Connecting Communities and Supporting Health Professionals, and staying current on

the latest health issues.

With an expected graduation in May 2024, Borlongan's journey at NMC is distinguished by her unwavering commitment to healthcare and her passion for advocating for positive change within the industry.

Borlongan's aspiration to pursue a career in nursing stemmed from her profound realization of systemic issues within the healthcare sector and her strong desire to be a catalyst for reform. Witnessing instances where patients and healthcare professionals were deprived of the quality care they deserved ignited Borlongan's determination to take action and contribute to transforming the system. Nursing, to Borlongan, is not just a profession but a vocation rooted in compassion and a deep-seated commitment to making a tangible difference in individuals' lives.

"Embodying the change I wish to see in the healthcare system is what propels me forward," Borlongan said. "Nursing is more than a career—it's a calling."

As Borlongan progresses through her nursing education at NMC, she is drawn to spe-

cializing in emergency care with a particular focus on geriatric nursing. Her passion lies in providing support to older patients, empowering them to maintain their independence and quality of life amidst health challenges.

Despite the rigorous demands of the nursing program, Borlongan has implemented strategies to manage her workload effectively while prioritizing self-care. By adopting a day-by-day approach

and carving out dedicated time for personal reflection and connections with loved ones, Borlongan maintains a harmonious balance between her academic pursuits and well-being.

"My experiences have underscored the importance of self-care throughout one's career," Borlongan said. "Neglecting self-care compromises one's ability to provide effective care to others."

Looking ahead, Borlongan aims to bring compassion and amplified patient advocacy to the healthcare system in the Commonwealth. She believes in fostering trusting relationships with patients,

thereby enabling effective advocacy and the delivery of compassionate care.

"Above all, I look forward to bringing compassion and heightened patient advocacy into our healthcare system," Borlongan said. "Being a nurse involves not only providing care but also advocating tirelessly for patients' rights."

In a region where healthcare resources are scarce, Borlongan underscores the significance of a robust nursing workforce for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. She emphasizes nurses' pivotal role in fostering a supportive environment and delivering es-

sential care without necessitating referrals off the island.

"As nurses, we play a critical role in promoting community health and facilitating disease prevention," Borlongan said. "A robust nursing workforce is indispensable for addressing our islands' healthcare needs."

As Borlongan continues her journey toward becoming a registered nurse, her steadfast dedication to healthcare and unwavering commitment to driving positive change serve as a beacon of inspiration to her peers and the community.

For more information about NMC Area Health Education

Center or the AHEC Scholars Program, contact (670) 237-6802/6810 or email ahec@marianan.edu.

About AHEC

Created by Congress in 1971, the Area Health Education Centers program was developed to recruit, train and retain a health professions workforce committed to underserved populations. The AHEC program helps bring the resources of academic medicine to address local community health needs. It is an important part of the nation's health workforce development infrastructure. (NMC)



Borlongan

Ogo seeks to bolster local bottling industry and combat plastic waste

Rep. Julie Ogo (Ind-Rota) unveiled yesterday her comprehensive legislative proposal to strengthen the local bottling industry while addressing the pressing issue of plastic waste in our communities.

The proposed bill, the "Foreign Bottled Water Excise Tax and Recycling Incentive Program Act of 2024," seeks to increase excise taxes on foreign bottled products while incentivizing local bottling companies to expand their operations and establish robust recycling programs.

Under the provisions of the proposed legislation, excise taxes on foreign bottled products would be raised, leveling the playing field for domestic bottlers and providing them with a competitive edge in the market.

Ogo emphasized the importance of supporting local businesses and creating opportunities for growth within the bottling industry.

In addition to boosting the competitiveness of local bottlers, the bill includes provisions to encourage these companies to take greater responsibility for their environmental impact.

Ogo stressed the need for

corporate accountability, saying, "Companies should be more responsible when it comes to recycling their waste in the community."

One of the key components of the legislation is the establishment of incentives for local bottling companies to develop and implement recycling programs to minimize plastic waste. By empowering these companies to take proactive measures to address environmental concerns, the bill aims to promote sustainability and reduce the environmental footprint of the bottling industry.

Ogo is confident that the proposed legislation would not only benefit local businesses but also contribute to a cleaner and healthier environment for future generations. She urged her colleagues to support the bill and emphasized the importance of bipartisan cooperation in addressing critical issues such as plastic waste management and economic development.

As the legislative process moves forward, Ogo remains committed to working with stakeholders from across the political spectrum to ensure the passage of this vital piece of legislation. (PR)

GRAPHIC DESIGN SERVICES

GET THE DESIGNS YOU NEED

✔ Brochure Design

✔ Advertisement Design

✔ Banner Design

✔ Logo Design

✔ Designing Business Cards

✔ Poster Design

☎ (670) 235-2440

✉ sales@saipantribune.com🌐 www.saipantribune.com

Hafa Adoll
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 62Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950**Mark Rabago** EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Russia's two-face on terror: Coddling Hamas while being attacked by ISIS

A few hours after Russia vetoed a carefully crafted and comprehensive resolution at the UN Security Council table in New York for an "immediate and sustained ceasefire" in Gaza because the Kremlin didn't want to embarrass their friends in Hamas, the nihilist soulmates of Hamas, ISIS, launched a horrendous terrorist attack in Moscow, murdering dozens of concertgoers. The world mourns for Moscow.

Savage, bloody terror, whether coming from Hamas on Oct. 7 in their rampage of murder, rape and kidnapping against Israelis, which precipitated the Gaza war, or from ISIS, is the same. The civilized world must unite against such barbaric crimes. Yet, that Russia supports one kind of terror based on who the victims are, Israelis, only weakens their fight against the terror of ISIS.

ISIS must be eliminated. So must Hamas, which will free the Palestinians living under their tyranny.

Two weeks ago, Russia's Federal Security Service thwarted an ISIS plot to assault a synagogue in Moscow. We know now that when that atrocity didn't occur, ISIS looked and found another target in the Russian capital.

But Friday morning in New York, Russia (and their buddy China) used their veto to stop a resolution that achieved what everyone on all sides have been calling for, having been painstakingly negotiated by U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield in consultation with all parties.

The now-defeated measure called for the immediate end to Israel's armed pursuit against Hamas, which has caused great suffering among Palestinian civilians, killing thousands of non-combatants. It also called for the release of the Israeli hostages held by Hamas. But Russia killed it.

It stressed "grave concern for the safety and well-being of the civilian population of Gaza, including the more than 1.5 million civilians now taking refuge in Rafah" and warned that "a ground offensive into Rafah would result in further harm to civilians and their further displacement." But Russia killed it.

It deplored the civilians killed and injured, the damage to civilian infrastructure and urged the protection of medical facilities and the urgent need for large scale humanitarian aid and food to be coming in. The resolution decried the suffering and hunger and pointed to the risk of famine and epidemics. But Russia killed it.

It called for no changes in Jerusalem's holy sites and an insistence that Gaza must be part of a future Palestinian state along with the West Bank. It also said that there must be no forced displacement of Gaza's civilian Palestinian population and no new buffer zones (as some speculate that Israel might seek). But Russia killed it.

There was also a proper condemnation of Israeli government ministers who've called for population or territorial changes in Gaza. But Russia killed it.

Thomas-Greenfield said that Russia used its veto because the resolution was offered by the Americans and that it also

See **RUSSIA'S** on Page 7

Who has the moral authority to speak about Israel's excesses? Certainly not Donald Trump

Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer was not only brave but correct recently when he called for new Israeli elections and the ouster of hard-right Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has thumbed his nose at the world with his callous and continuing assault on the people of Gaza.

"We love Israel in our bones," said Schumer, a Democrat and the highest-ranking elected Jewish official in American history, as he proceeded to explain why, for Israel to survive and flourish, Netanyahu must go.

"We should not let the complexities of this conflict stop us from stating the plain truth," Schumer said. "Palestinian civilians do not deserve to suffer for the sins of Hamas, and Israel has a moral obligation to do better. The United States has an obligation to do better."

Offended that Schumer would dare speak truth to Bibi, Senate Republicans immediately invited the Israeli leader to address them privately. House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., has said he will invite Netanyahu to speak to a joint session of Congress. Schumer, to his credit, turned down Netanyahu's request to privately address Senate Democrats, but he welcomed the idea of a speech to the full Congress.

"Israel has no stronger ally than the United States and our relationship transcends any one president or any one prime minister," Schumer said in a statement. "I will always welcome the opportunity for the prime minister of Israel to speak to Congress in a bipartisan way."

And former President Donald Trump's contribution to this delicate moment?

The GOP's 2024 presidential nominee has shown once again that he is incapable of demonstrating the intellectual, emotional or political nuance required of world leaders.

"Any Jewish person that votes for Democrats hates their religion," Trump told podcast host and MAGA sycophant Sebastian Gorka. "They hate everything about Israel, and they should be ashamed of themselves because Israel will be destroyed."

Trump's increasingly desperate rhetoric mirrors his increasingly desperate legal and financial situation.

He has failed to come up with enough money to cover the multi-million-dollar judgment against him in a New York fraud case and now finds himself in a previously unthinkable place.

He is contemplating what must be—to him—the horror of either declaring bankruptcy or selling off some of his precious real estate, much of which is apparently less valuable than he has claimed, which is partly why he is in this predicament in the first place.

Trump is like a cornered animal, spitting and snarling his way toward November.

A little more than a week ago, he warned autoworkers in Ohio of a "bloodbath" if he does not win the 2024 campaign. His choice of words has occasioned much commentary on whether he was speaking narrowly about the fate of the auto industry in a second Biden administration, or in general about what a loss would unleash from his disappointed voters. (The actual quote was ambiguous: "Now, if I don't get elected, it's going to be a bloodbath for the whole—that's going to be the

By **ROBIN ABCARIAN**

Los Angeles Times



least of it. It's going to be a bloodbath for the country.")

Anyway, searching for subtlety or clarity in a Trump speech is pointless.

For argument's sake, though, let's say he was speaking metaphorically and not calling for a literal armed insurrection in the event of yet another election failure.

Does anyone really think if Trump loses a second time to President Biden he will go quietly?

He has already presided over a literal bloodbath—you know, the one that took place on Jan. 6, 2021—and seemed to enjoy it immensely.

In fact, on the same day Trump was ranting to autoworkers, former Wyoming Republican Rep. Liz Cheney, his nemesis, was being interviewed at the New Orleans Book Festival by the biographer Walter Isaacson.

Cheney told Isaacson that during testimony given to the House committee investigating Jan. 6, she'd learned that the president, who was watching the riot unfold on television, did nothing to stop it even after being informed that someone had been shot trying to break into the House chamber. (That was, of course, Ashli Babbitt, whom Trump has tried to turn into a martyr, along with the "hostages" and "unbelievable patriots" now incarcerated for storming the Capitol.)

"We know that when he was handed that note, he put it down on the table in front of him and he continued to watch the attack on television," Cheney said. "Now, I don't care if you're a Democrat or a Republican or an independent, that's depravity."

No question about that.

In his new book, "The Return of Great Powers," CNN's chief national security analyst Jim Sciutto quotes Trump's second chief of staff, John F. Kelly, as saying that Trump had spoken favorably of Adolf Hitler.

"Well, but Hitler did some good things," Kelly said Trump told him when Kelly urged the president to stop praising the genocidal Nazi warmonger.

"It's pretty hard to believe he missed the Holocaust, though, and pretty hard to understand how he missed the 400,000 American GIs that were killed in the European theater," Kelly told Sciutto.

Hard to believe that this is the man Republicans are trying to put back in the White House.

The more government ‘borrows,’ the more we pay—today—for mortgages, credit cards, student loans, and much more

If you think the Treasury Department borrowing trillions of dollars is a problem only for future generations, think again. The interest rates on your credit cards, student loans—even your mortgage—are all up now because of the Treasury’s borrowing spree, and it’s costing you thousands.

The runaway spending in Washington has been a problem for decades, but it got a violent shove into overdrive during the last several years. The Biden administration and their big-spender allies in Congress—from both parties—have already racked up \$6.8 trillion of additional debt. And that money had to come from somewhere.

For the first couple years of the Biden administration, it came from the Federal Reserve, which simply created the money. That devalued the currency and caused 40-year-high inflation. When the Fed stopped its printing presses, however, the Treasury had to borrow from the public.

That forced interest rates on Treasury bills, notes and bonds to rise—and fast. Many Treasury yields have quadrupled in less than four years. Some yields have increased 75-fold. The reason is simple: The Treasury is competing with everyone else to borrow trillions of dollars annually.

You may not realize it, but when you apply at a bank for a mortgage, or online for a credit card, or at a dealership for an auto loan, you’re actually competing to borrow money. A lender has many options when it comes to loaning out his money. And that means loan pricing is a competitive process.

We call the price to borrow money the interest rate. A higher interest rate means it’s more expensive to borrow, while a lower interest rate reduces the cost of borrowing.

Like other markets, when there is a surge in demand for loanable funds, the price rises. Hence, if people want to borrow much more money, interest rates offered on loans will march upward. Those borrowers who are willing to pay more will receive loans; the other would-be borrowers receive nothing.

The Treasury has provided just such a demand surge—in spades. The federal government is running a \$3 trillion annualized deficit for the current fiscal year. To lure lenders away from private borrowers, the Treasury was forced to offer higher interest rates.

But that left less money available for those private borrowers, both individuals and businesses alike. With potential borrowers competing for fewer dollars, the interest rate for private loans also rose.

To add insult to injury, 40-year-high inflation has so increased people’s cost of living that they’re able to save less, if anything at all. The average savings rate today is less than half of its pre-pandemic level, and the reduction in savings has decreased the amount of money available for lending.

The smaller supply of loanable funds has also pushed up the price of borrowing, driving interest rates even higher.

Furthermore, Treasuries are viewed as essentially guaranteed, having no default risk. Any individual, no matter how creditworthy, will have some level of risk for which the lender will ask to be compensated. That means private borrowers will pay an interest rate premium compared to the federal government.

The result has been a tripling of mortgage interest rates for many borrowers, record high interest rates on credit cards, and the highest student and auto loan interest rates in more than a decade.

Americans are paying over \$240 billion annually just in credit card interest, before they put a dime toward actually paying down their balances. For the first time ever, interest on non-mortgage debt has caught up to the interest families are paying on their mortgages.

Speaking of mortgages, higher interest rates have increased the monthly payment on a median price home by over \$1,000 compared to three years ago. That’s an extra \$12,000 each year—for 30 years—for the same house.

It’s the same story with student and auto loans: The typical American family is paying thousands more annually in interest payments now than in 2021.

By **E.J. ANTONI**

The Heritage Foundation

E. J. Antoni is a public finance economist at the Heritage Foundation and a senior fellow at Committee to Unleash Prosperity.



The high borrowing costs punishing American families are here to stay as long as Congress continues its breakneck pace of deficit spending. Until that stops, the Treasury will continue sucking all the oxygen out of the room, while American families suffocate financially.

Spring into Easter

LITERARY NOOK

By **JOEY ‘PEPE BATBON’**

CONNOLLY

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka “Pepe Batbon” Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. Joey is the Poet Laureate of Tinian, celebrating 40 years in the CNMI.



Vernal Equinox Diurnal Journal

On every island in the CNMI spring has sprung
All year long through all four seasons it is strung
We only have two seasons, one rainy and one dry
Our location near the Equator is the reason why

Tall grass, weeds, and wildflowers have their fling
All year-round flowers bloom diurnal and nocturnal
To fences, poles, and houses vines and flowers cling
Seeds spread by winds and birds each a fertile kernel

Orchids prosper and bloom outside in coconut shells
Bougainvillea blooms cover neighborhood fences
Gardenia flowers emit their powerful scented smells
Hundreds of wildflowers amaze one’s visual senses

Our Mariana islands remain perpetually vernal
Our beauty writes its own eternally green journal.

Funny Easter Bunnies Lay Eggs Not Runny

This sonnet is for the time when ladies wore colorful hats called Easter bonnets to their church on Easter Sunday. Straw baskets were filled with decorated colored hard boiled eggs, chocolate eggs, jellybeans, and chocolate rabbits:

Chocolate rabbits are covered with multicolored foil
What are those oval pastel things under their legs?
They are the results of pots of water brought to a boil
Colored and pastel decorated hard boiled chicken eggs.
Since when do rabbits lay eggs that are not runny?
Does a mother hen give birth to a little baby bunny?
Of course eggs are classic symbols of birth and life
Hard boiled they are eaten without a fork or knife
No chocolate or hard candy for you in Lent you fasted
As each little boy and girl in dreamy slumber sleeps
the Easter egg hunt is over now a filled Easter basket
with jellybeans, eggs, and yellow marshmallow peeps
peel foil for chocolate, peel egg shells make egg salad
sing about Easter bunnies and bonnets in an old ballad.

RUSSIA’S

From page 6

called out Hamas by name.

Yes, it did condemn the murderers, rapists and kidnappers of Hamas, without whom there would be peace in Gaza, no war, no deaths, no destruction and no hostages.

Russia refused everything that the resolution promised, including a ceasefire, freedom for the hostages and relief for the suffering Palestinians of Gaza all to shield Hamas and deny credit to Washington.

Moscow let terror win and then Moscow was struck by terror.

It’s not what Trump says; it’s what his supporters hear

By the time you read this, there’s a good chance that we’ll have already stopped talking about former president Donald Trump’s notorious “bloodbath” comment of March 16.

Most provocative Trumpian tropes have a short half-life. They’re quickly eclipsed by subsequent remarks, such as Trump’s musings about cutting Social Security and Medicare and his recent assertion that Jews who vote Democratic hate Israel and hate Judaism.

Still, the “bloodbath” remark is worth a column’s consideration: Here’s the expression in question:

“Now if I don’t get elected, it’s going to be a bloodbath for the whole—that’s going to be the least of it. It’s going to be a bloodbath for the country.”

Trump apologists quickly pointed out that the context of his remark involved the automobile industry and argued that the reference was metaphorical. But that sounds like a hasty, not entirely convincing, rationalization.

The statement, in fact, could be parsed in a much darker way, as well, but there’s not much point in doing so: What’s important is not what Trump says or means or thinks he means, but what his most devoted supporters actually hear.

On Jan. 6, for example, after Trump falsely asserted that the election had been stolen, he challenged his followers to march to the capitol and “...fight like hell and if you don’t fight like hell, you’re not going to have a country anymore.”

What did he mean?

He might have meant something like: March to the capitol grounds and make speeches opposing the certification of the election; try to contact your representatives and urge them to vote against certification; wave banners advocating “Stop the Steal”; set up tables and urge passersby to sign petitions against certification.

But whatever Trump meant by “fight,” thousands of his supporters understood him to mean that they should break into the capitol, assault police officers, occupy the Senate chamber and rifle through desks, do harm to Nancy Pelosi if they could find her and threaten to hang Mike Pence.

If Trump’s words were misinterpreted by the insurrectionists, he didn’t appear to be horrified by the violence. On the contrary, he delayed several hours before calling them off, despite entreaties by officials, staff and even his family.

We could note other examples: During a debate in the 2016

By **JOHN M. CRISP**

Tribune News Service

John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, lives in Texas and can be reached at jcrispcolumns@gmail.com.



campaign, Trump was challenged to disavow the white supremacist Proud Boys. The best he could come up with was “Stand back and stand by.” What he meant is unclear, but I’m guessing that the Proud Boys heard “Stand by” more clearly than “Stand back.” Indeed, they were ready on Jan. 6.

Does Trump really believe that Democrats are “vermin”? That the press is “scum.” That some women are “dogs.” That many nations inhabited by people of color are “s---hole” countries?

That’s the problem with careless language and ill-considered metaphors. Once you express them you lose control, and they take on the meanings and connotations that your hearers apply to them.

If Trump really meant a metaphorical “bloodbath” that is confined to the automobile industry, he’s depending heavily on his audience to make that nuanced distinction and forgetting that many of them are already prepared and eager to “fight.”

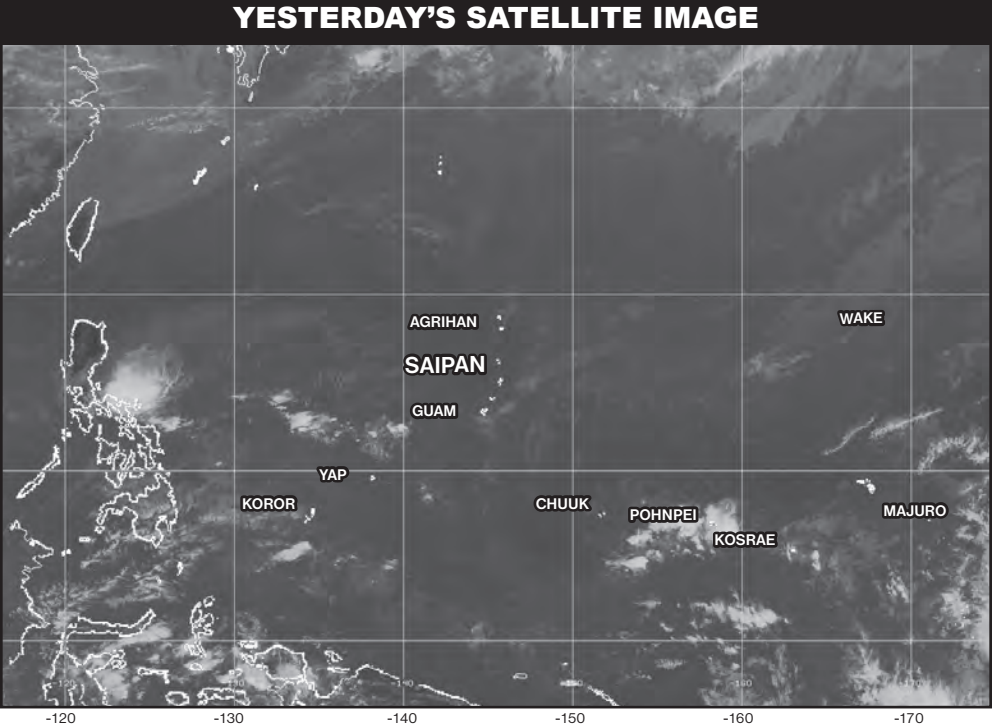
Here’s a relevant question: If Trump loses in 2024, whether by a little or a landslide, will he peacefully concede? It’s hard to imagine. But terms such as “bloodbath” crank up the temperature considerably. And whether Trump uses them figuratively or literally, what his supporters hear is more important than what he says.

Given that “bloodbath” is only one of an extended set of beligerent terms that Trump is fond of using; given that recent polls indicate that up to 39% of Republicans believe that political violence is sometimes justified and necessary; given that our nation is awash in weapons; and given that Trump has convinced his supporters that the existence of our nation is at stake, it’s naïve to believe that this election will end peacefully.

It’s not clear that Trump is advocating for a literal “bloodbath,” but given his behavior on Jan. 6, it’s clear that he’s open to one. Brace yourself.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
Partly cloudy, except mostly cloudy Wednesday night. Isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	
86	76°	86	76°	86	75°	86	75°	86	75°



PICTURE TIME: 6:23 AM TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Scattered showers continue to cross the region this morning. Seas are still a little elevated with the latest altimetry showing them averaging in the 9 to 10 foot range.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: <https://www.weather.gov/gum/>

MICRONESIA			▲▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 79°	
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 80°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	89° / 80°	
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	90° / 82°	
Pohnpei	Rain Shower	88° / 80°	
Kosrae	Showers in the Vicinity	86° / 79°	
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 82°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:16 AM	6:28 PM
Thursday	6:15 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:14 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM
Sunday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	7:14 AM	8:01 PM
Thursday	-	7:49 AM	8:51 PM
Friday	-	8:28 AM	9:44 PM
Saturday	-	9:12 AM	10:39 PM
Sunday	-	10:00 AM	11:37 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	66° / 54°	
Beijing	Mist	62° / 40°	
Hong Kong	Haze	82° / 72°	
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	79° / 72°	
London	Partly Cloudy	54° / 36°	
Los Angeles	Fair	67° / 49°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	93° / 80°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	79° / 59°	
Miami	Mostly Sunny	82° / 72°	
New York	Partly Cloudy	55° / 46°	
Osaka	Rain	57° / 51°	
Paris	Rain	57° / 38°	
Busan	Rain	63° / 45°	
Rome	Showers	54° / 46°	
Salem	Sunny	82° / 60°	
San Francisco	Sunny	55° / 45°	
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	56° / 36°	
Tokyo	Rain	54° / 50°	
Washington, DC	Fair	56° / 37°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
2:53 AM	Low Tide	0.61	
8:35 AM	High Tide	1.76	
3:14 PM	Low Tide	0.26	
9:25 PM	High Tide	1.72	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 1, 2024

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA189	00:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
UA193	7:50PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA183	7:55PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
7C3403/2305	4:40AM	10:20PM	Daily	UA189/174	00:40AM	8:45AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
				7C2306/3406	11:15PM	3:30PM+1	Daily
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:15AM	6:10AM	Daily	7C3462	08:00AM	1:30PM	Daily Feb 7-16 only
7C3403	4:40AM	8:35AM	Daily	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily	TW307	7:45PM	1:15AM+1	Daily
				7C3404	10:15PM	3:35AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024


SAIPAN TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday
GUAM TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday
SAIPAN TO TINIAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily
TINIAN TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235.3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp
Website: <http://www.nmhc.gov.net>
Tels: (670) 234-9447 | 234-6866 | 234-7670
Fax: (670) 234-9021

NUTISIAN PUPBLIKU

(February 27, 2024)

Signon para i Seksiona 5 A. gi “Northern Marianas Housing Corporation” (“NMHC”) i “Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (“CDBG-DR”)” na Prugráman “Action Plan” (“AP”), para u manafanungu’ i henerát pupbliku put esti i manmaproponi na “substantial” yan “non-substantial” na amenda siha gi CDBG-DR AP yan para u maná’i i pupbliku tiempu para u fampattisipáo yan i uputunidát para u famanoppi’ gi esti i manmaproponi na amenda siha. I henerát pupbliku debi na u ma’intrega hálum i upiñon-ñiha gi halum trenta (30) dihas ginen i fetchan publikasion nu esti na Nutisia put esti i tinilaika ni manmaproponi siha gi CDBG-DR AP.

I “substantial” na amenda siha manaprisisu yanggin guaha tinilaika gi halum i prugráman benifisiu/“criteria” i kuálifikáo, “addition/deletion” nu i aktibidát, o sino “reallocation” i “substantial amount”. I “substantial” na amenda siempri lokku’i prumisisu yanggin kuatkuet na tinilaika siha gi prugráma umupus i singku miyon pesus (\$5,000,000). I “substantial” na amenda debi na u pribeni rasonápbli na uputunidát (maseha 30 dihas) para upiñon pupbliku.

Todu i tinilaika siha debi na u madukumentu ni Prugráman NMHC’s CDBG-DR para u pribeni todú i dos nisisáriu yan rasonápbli na “justification”. Todú i “substantial” na amenda siha siempri ingklusu i mantinattiyi:

- I eksakto na aidentifikasion nu mánu na sinahguan maná’yi, mafunas, pat matulaika;
- Kláru na diskripsion nu ginen mánu/para mánu i fundu; yan
- I más nuebu yan maribisa na “budget” dispues dí i “re-allocation” nu i saláppi’.

Gi inátlabis, i “non-substantial” na amenda siha para i “Action Plan” ti manmasuhetu para pátispasion siudadanu láo i NMHC madisidí para u ingklusu i “non-substantial” na amenda para i mamensiona na Plánu gi halum esti na Nutisia para infotmasion ha’ na rason siha. Yan más, todú i “action plan” na amenda siha siempri managuaha gi website i CNMI CDBG-DR gi www.cnmicdbg-dr.com yan siña machuli’ kopia gi ufisinan i NMHC yan i CDBG-DR siha ni gaigi iya Saipan, Tinian, yan Luta para etyi siha i ti siña ma’akses i “Internet”. I ninatutungu’ i pupbliku mampus impottánti sa’ esti na fundu dinipendi meggai gi pátispasion pupbliku yan i tetenan ni ti matakka’ nisisita para u ma’ebalua.

I NMHC siempri ma’usa i mantinattiyi na “avenues/outlets” para u manafanungu’ i pupbliku put i Prugráman CDBG-DR:

- Nutisia gi halum gaseta
- Anunsio Rediu • Social media
- CNMI CDBG-DR website

Uttimu, i NMHC siempri ha chuli’ rasonápbli na manera para u na’siguru na i “very low-, low-,” yan “moderateincome” na petsona siha, kuntodu i táotáo ni gai disiblidát, i gai inamku’ yan i táotáo ni “Limited English Proficiency (LEP)” na managuaha akses para u más makumprendi i prugráma yan parehu na uputunidát para u fampattisipáo gi halum esti impottánti na aktibidát i CDBG-DR ni kumunfotma yan i manmakátkátga na “policies” yan “procedures” ni gaigi gi halum i Prugráman CDBG-DR Citizen Participation Plan.” I manmamensiona yan kumplidu na “Citizen Participation Plan” siña ma’akses gi website i CNMI CDBG-DR gi: www.cnmi-cdbg-dr.com o sino siña masodda’ gi Subsection 4.E.1. Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of the CDBG-DR Action Plan (pages 72 - 74), ni ma amenda. I kopian i “Action Plan”, komu ma’amenda ginen esti na tinilaika na priponi siha, siña ma’akses gi website i CNMI CDBG-DR gi: www.cnmi-cdbg-dr.com o sino siña machuli’ kopia gi maseha mánu na ufisinan i NMHC iya Saipan, Tinian, yan Luta.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Proposed changes are highlighted in yellow. The corresponding page numbers reflect the actual page numbers of the most current action plan, as amended and posted on NMHC’s CDBG-DR website at: <https://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com/action-plan/action-plan-documents/>.

SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT NO. 03

Summary and Modifications

Pursuant to **Subsection 5.D.**¹, the following proposed modifications shall go into effect after the required 30-day public comment period ends and concurrence from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The proposed modifications, as presented herein, were prompted by the following reason(s):

- After close consultation with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”), the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation “NMHC” (hereinafter referred to as the “Grantee” interchangeably) hereby seeks to assist Non-LMI² homeowners whose single and principal dwellings or homes were damaged by qualifying storm(s)³ under the Urgent Need National Objective;
- There are still families, bona fide disaster victims, whose total household income exceed the NMHC-CDBG-DR Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program’s Income Limits schedule and whose homes were destroyed by qualifying storm(s) and remain in disrepair;
- 13 families have thus far been identified as non-LMI household applicants whose applications were previously denied under NMHC’s CDBG-DR Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program due to household incomes exceeding the program’s Income Limits schedule, and whose homes were destroyed by qualifying disaster(s) and remain in disrepair;

¹A **substantial amendment** is defined as a change in program benefit or eligibility criteria; the addition or deletion of an activity; or the allocation or reallocation of a monetary threshold specified by the grantee in its action plan. The CNMI monetary threshold for a substantial amendment is any changes in Action Plan amounts that exceed \$5 million. Substantial amendments are changes to an Action Plan which require a 30-day public comment period. All amendments will be listed on the CDBG-DR website sequentially.

² 80.01% or greater AMI

³Presidentially Declared Disasters: 1. Typhoon Mangkhut; and 2. Super Typhoon Yutu

- 80% (\$31,525,626) of NMHC’s CDBG-DR Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program’s total allocation has been set aside to assist an estimated 126 eligible LMI families rehabilitate or reconstruct their storm-damaged homes under the LMI National Objective while the remaining 20% (\$7,881,407) will be used to assist 31 eligible Non-LMIs under the Urgent Need National Objective;

5. Section 1 of 85 FR 4651 provides that “A Grantee may determine where to use the remaining 20 percent of the allocation, but that portion of the allocation may only be used to address unmet disaster needs in those areas that the grantee determines are ‘most impacted and distressed’ (Municipalities of Saipan and Tinian) and that received a presidential major disaster declaration...” Clearly, unmet disaster needs in these MID areas still exist but NMHC’s program Income Limits schedule, which is not required under this particular program, precludes this class of applicants from qualifying for CDBG-DR financial assistance under NMHC’s CDBG-DR Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction program;

- It has been determined that the current Income Limits schedule for non-LMIs under the Urgent Need National Objective, 80.01% - 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI), needs to be amended in order for NMHC to assist more disaster victims rehabilitate or reconstruct their homes and whose incomes exceed 120% AMI;
- HUD does not object to this proposed Substantial Amendment but strongly recommends that the thirteen (13) non-LMI applicants who previously applied and were subsequently denied assistance due to their incomes exceeding the program’s current Income Limits schedule (80.01% - 120%) under the Urgent Need National Objective and that NMHC has on record to be assisted first;
- This Substantial Amendment is required to authorize NMHC to modify the program’s Income Limits schedule to allow the agency to assist disaster victims, whose total household incomes exceed the program’s Income Limits schedule of 120% AMI, repair their homes. Financial Assistance shall be subject to availability of funds.


Pages 73 - 74

g. Target Groups

The program will categorize the target groups by the following income ranges:

TARGET GROUPS	CDBG-DR PROGRAM CNMI-MEDIAN INCOME RANGE	INTEREST RATE	TYPE OF ASSISTANCE
First	0%-30%	0% N/A	Deferred Loan Grant
Second	30.01% -50%	0% N/A	75% Deferred Loan and 25% Non-Interest-Bearing Loan Grant
Third	50.01% - 80%	0% N/A	50% Deferred Loan and 50% Non-Interest-Bearing Loan Grant
Fourth	80.01% - 120% or greater	0% N/A	25% Deferred Loan and 75% Non-Interest-Bearing Loan Grant (The national objective for this group is urgent need)

Written comments are due by March 28, 2024 and may be faxed to Fax No.: (670) 234-9451, mailed to P.O. Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhc.gov.net.




Tinian Field Office
Tel: (670)433-9213 | Fax: (670)433-3690

“NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency”

Rota Field Office:
Tel: (670)532-9410 | Fax: (670)532-9441

CDBG-DR Office: Tel: (670)233-9447 / 9448/9449



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp
Website: <http://www.nmhc.gov.net>
Tels: (670) 234-9447 | 234-6866 | 234-7670
Fax: (670) 234-9021

PUBLIC NOTICE

(February 27, 2024)

Pursuant to Section 5 A. of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (“NMHC”) Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (“CDBG-DR”) Program’s Action Plan (“AP”), this is to notify the general public about these proposed substantial and non-substantial amendments to the CDBG-DR AP and afford citizen participation and the opportunity to comment on these proposed amendments.

The general public has thirty (30) days from publication date of this Public Notice to submit comments on these proposed changes to the CDBG-DR AP. Substantial amendments are required when there is a change in program benefit/eligibility criteria, addition/deletion of an activity, or reallocation of substantial amounts.

A substantial amendment will also be required if any program changes exceed five million dollars (\$5,000,000). Substantial amendments must provide a reasonable opportunity (at least 30 days) for citizen comment. All changes must be documented by NMHC’s CDBG-DR Program to provide both necessary and reasonable justifications. All substantial amendments will include the following:

- The exact identification of which content is being added, deleted, or changed;
- A clear description of where funds are moved from/to; and
- The updated and revised budget after re-allocation of funding.

Conversely, non-substantial amendments to the Action Plan are not subject to citizen participation but NMHC decided to include a non-substantial amendment to the said Plan in this Public Notice for informational purposes only. Furthermore, all action plan amendments will be available via the CNMI CDBG-DR website at www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com and hardcopies may be obtained at any of the NMHC central and CDBG-DR offices located on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota by those who do not have access to the Internet. Notifying the public is of paramount importance as these funds are largely dependent on public participation and the remaining unmet need to be assessed. NMHC will utilize the following avenues/outlets to notify the public of the CDBG-DR Program:

- Notices in the local newspaper
- Radio announcements
- Social media
- CNMI CDBG-DR website

Last, NMHC will take reasonable steps to ensure very low-, low-, and moderate-income persons, including persons with disabilities, the elderly and persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in this important CDBG-DR activity and in accordance to prescribed policies and procedures embedded in the CDBG-DR Program’s Citizen Participation Plan. The aforesaid and complete Citizen Participation Plan may be accessed at the CNMI CDBG-DR website: www.cnmi-cdbg-dr.com or found at Subsection 4.E.1. Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of the CDBG-DR Action Plan (pages 72 - 74), as amended. A copy of the Action Plan, as amended by these proposed changes, may be accessed at the CNMI CDBG-DR website at: www.cnmi-cdbg-dr.com or obtained at any of the NMHC offices on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Proposed changes are highlighted in yellow. The corresponding page numbers reflect the actual page numbers of the most current action plan, as amended and posted on NMHC’s CDBG-DR website at: <https://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com/action-plan/action-plan-documents/>.

SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT NO. 03

Summary and Modifications

Pursuant to **Subsection 5.D.**¹, the following proposed modifications shall go into effect after the required 30-day public comment period ends and concurrence from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The proposed modifications, as presented herein, were prompted by the following reason(s):

- After close consultation with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”), the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation “NMHC” (hereinafter referred to as the “Grantee” interchangeably) hereby seeks to assist Non-LMI² homeowners whose single and principal dwellings or homes were damaged by qualifying storm(s)³ under the Urgent Need National Objective;
- There are still families, bona fide disaster victims, whose total household income exceed the NMHC-CDBG-DR Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program’s Income Limits schedule and whose homes were destroyed by qualifying storm(s) and remain in disrepair;
- 13 families have thus far been identified as non-LMI household applicants whose applications were previously denied under NMHC’s CDBG-DR Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program due to household incomes exceeding the program’s Income Limits schedule, and whose homes were destroyed by qualifying disaster(s) and remain in disrepair;

¹A **substantial amendment** is defined as a change in program benefit or eligibility criteria; the addition or deletion of an activity; or the allocation or reallocation of a monetary threshold specified by the grantee in its action plan. The CNMI monetary threshold for a substantial amendment is any changes in Action Plan amounts that exceed \$5 million. Substantial amendments are changes to an Action Plan which require a 30-day public comment period. All amendments will be listed on the CDBG-DR website sequentially.

² 80.01% or greater AMI

³Presidentially Declared Disasters: 1. Typhoon Mangkhut; and 2. Super Typhoon Yutu

- 80% (\$31,525,626) of NMHC’s CDBG-DR Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program’s total allocation has been set aside to assist an estimated 126 eligible LMI families rehabilitate or reconstruct their storm-damaged homes under the LMI National Objective while the remaining 20% (\$7,881,407) will be used to assist 31 eligible Non-LMIs under the Urgent Need National Objective;

5. Section 1 of 85 FR 4651 provides that “A Grantee may determine where to use the remaining 20 percent of the allocation, but that portion of the allocation may only be used to address unmet disaster needs in those areas that the grantee determines are ‘most impacted and distressed’ (Municipalities of Saipan and Tinian) and that received a presidential major disaster declaration...” Clearly, unmet disaster needs in these MID areas still exist but NMHC’s program Income Limits schedule, which is not required under this particular program, precludes this class of applicants from qualifying for CDBG-DR financial assistance under NMHC’s CDBG-DR Homeowner Rehabilitation and Reconstruction program;

- It has been determined that the current Income Limits schedule for non-LMIs under the Urgent Need National Objective, 80.01% - 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI), needs to be amended in order for NMHC to assist more disaster victims rehabilitate or reconstruct their homes and whose incomes exceed 120% AMI;
- HUD does not object to this proposed Substantial Amendment but strongly recommends that the thirteen (13) non-LMI applicants who previously applied and were subsequently denied assistance due to their incomes exceeding the program’s current Income Limits schedule (80.01% - 120%) set under the Urgent Need National Objective and that NMHC has on record to be assisted first;
- This Substantial Amendment is required to authorize NMHC to modify the program’s Income Limits schedule to allow the agency to assist disaster victims, whose total household incomes exceed the program’s Income Limits schedule of 120% AMI, repair their homes. Financial Assistance shall be subject to availability of funds.


Pages 73 - 74

g. Target Groups

The program will categorize the target groups by the following income ranges:

TARGET GROUPS	CDBG-DR PROGRAM CNMI-MEDIAN INCOME RANGE	INTEREST RATE	TYPE OF ASSISTANCE
First	0%-30%	0% N/A	Deferred Loan Grant
Second	30.01% -50%	0% N/A	75% Deferred Loan and 25% Non-Interest-Bearing Loan Grant
Third	50.01% - 80%	0% N/A	50% Deferred Loan and 50% Non-Interest-Bearing Loan Grant
Fourth	80.01% - 120% or greater	0% N/A	25% Deferred Loan and 75% Non-Interest-Bearing Loan Grant (The national objective for this group is urgent need)

Written comments are due by March 28, 2024 and may be faxed to Fax No.: (670) 234-9451, mailed to P.O. Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhc.gov.net.



Tinian Field Office
Tel: (670)433-9213 | Fax: (670)433-3690

“NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency”

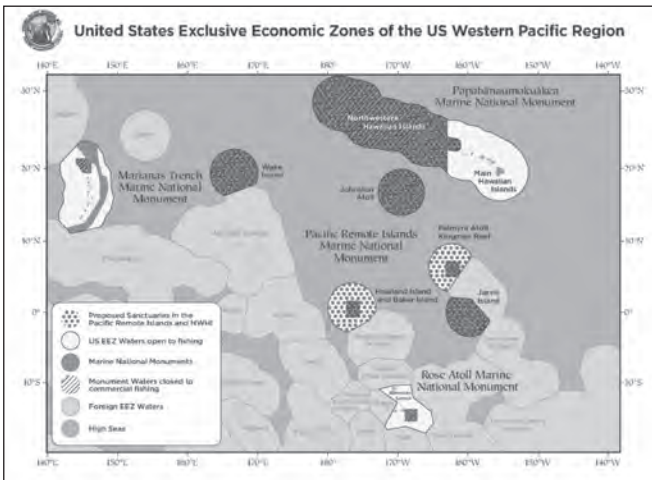
Rota Field Office:
Tel: (670)532-9410 | Fax: (670)532-9441

CDBG-DR Office: Tel: (670)233-9447 / 9448/9449

Business

FISHERMEN SOUND ALARM

'Gov't policies threaten way of life in US Pacific'



HONOLULU—Amid mounting concerns and resounding frustration, the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council convened its 198th meeting last week, where the voices of the fishing community advisors echoed with urgency. Their impassioned pleas highlighted the dire challenges facing the industry, including escalating anxieties over fishing area closures and the destabilizing impact of foreign seafood imports on market dynamics.

Hawai'i Advisory Panel member and Kaua'i fisherman Abraham Apilado, Jr. said, "If the goal is to sustain fisheries, major changes need to be made today. If the goal is to kill off the fishermen and resources, then keep doing what you're doing, because you're doing an amazing job."

The United States is proposing to overlay and extend the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and potentially the Pacific Remote Islands MNM with sanctuary regulations, compounding current fishing closures.

"The tuna industry is the only industry we have, the government relies on the canneries," said Gene Pan, American Samoa AP member and Fono representative. "You are stopping us from fishing but not the Chinese. Without the people, there is no Samoa."

Council Chair Will Sword stressed, "Without the

StarKist cannery, we cannot continue to sustain our cultural heritage and keep it vibrant. Further disadvantaging our remaining 12 purse seine vessels in American Samoa affects our cannery."

"Our purse seine boats can't compete because it's not a level playing field," said American Samoa AP member and Cape Fisheries CEO Joe Hamby. "The Seafood Import Monitoring Program is not working. U.S. fishers and processors should be protected by a duty on fish imports—seafood security is important. Fishing or processing, it's a matter of having the political will to defend against negative impacts to domestic producers."

Eric Kingma, Hawaii Longline Association executive director, said, "We are facing unprecedented market conditions. There is a large supply of fish coming in, driven by El Niño conditions. The market isn't there because of the huge amount of imported, subsidized, gassed tuna being 'dumped' into the market and retailers are not adjusting downward during periods of high local supply of fresh tuna. Not only is this bad for the local consumer, but it's unfair to the Hawai'i fishing industry. The subsidized foreign imports and retail price gouging on fresh landed 'ahi is really hurting the Hawai'i

longline fleet. Recently, vessels are averaging \$2-3 per lb for high quality 'ahi, but it's over \$30 per lb at the store. It's not fair to consumers or fishermen."

Council executive director Kitty Simonds said, "If you were the President of the United States, which would you choose—the people of the U.S. or your legacy?"

Fish stock assessment limitations in the Western Pacific

Hawai'i Council Member Matt Ramsey questioned how NOAA can develop strategies to promote seafood and equity and environmental justice, while at the same time limiting fishing opportunities. Sam Rauch, NOAA deputy assistant administrator for regulatory programs, stated, "The goal of NMFS is not to limit fishing opportunities in general. In fact, NMFS is supposed to promote optimum yield, and that is the task that both the Council and NMFS are tasked with under the Magnuson-Stevens Act."

The Council endorsed the Hawai'i and Guam bottomfish stock assessments to update catch limits. The previous Guam assessment, which found the bottomfish stock complex was overfished, used a model likely not suited for data-limited fisheries. The latest assessment, which used the same model with updated catch data, showed an improved stock condition, but not enough to rebuild the stock.

"It is one of the things we have learned particularly in the Western Pacific," Rauch said. "Models that we apply to manage fisheries for [optimum yield] elsewhere in the country sometimes break down when they are applied to artisanal, cultural or subsistence fishing, much like the type of fishing that happens in the territories." (PR)

US and UK go after Chinese hackers accused of state-backed operation vs. politicians, dissidents

WASHINGTON (AP)—Hackers linked to the Chinese government launched a sweeping, state-backed operation that targeted U.S. officials, journalists, corporations, pro-democracy activists and the U.K.'s election watchdog, American and British authorities said Monday in announcing a set of criminal charges and sanctions. The intention of the campaign, which

officials say began in 2010, was to harass critics of the Chinese government, steal trade secrets of American corporations and to spy on and track high-level political figures. Western officials disclosed the operation, carried out by a hacking group known as APT31, while sounding a fresh, election-year alarm about a country long seen as having advanced espionage ca-

pabilities. The U.S. Justice Department charged seven hackers, all believed to be living in China. The British government, in a related announcement, imposed sanctions on a front company and two of the defendants in connection with a breach that may have given the Chinese access to information on tens of millions of U.K. voters held by the Electoral Commission.

Nation



ACROSS THE NATION

New York City police officer fatally shot during traffic stop

A New York City police officer was shot and killed Monday during a traffic stop, the city's mayor said. It marked the first slaying of an NYPD officer in two years. "We lost one of our sons today and it is extremely painful. It is extremely painful," Mayor Eric Adams said, addressing reporters at the hospital where the officer died. The shooting happened just before 5:50 p.m. in the Far Rockaway section of Queens, police said, after Officer Jonathan Diller and his partner encountered a vehicle illegally parked at a bus stop. As they approached the vehicle, a man inside shot Diller below his bullet-proof vest, said Police Commissioner Edward Caban. Diller's partner returned fire and wounded the suspected shooter, who was brought to an area hospital. Diller was taken to Jamaica Hospital Medical Center but could not be saved, officials said. He had been with the police department for three years, was married and had a young child, Caban said on the social media platform X. "We struggle to find the words to express the tragedy of losing one of our own," Caban wrote. The police department's chief of detectives, Joseph Kenny, said Diller and his partner had initially tried to order the vehicle's driver and passenger out of the car, which was stopped on a busy but narrow street in a bustling commercial district. (AP)

Court agrees to pause collection of Trump's massive civil fraud judgment if he puts up \$175M

NEW YORK (AP)—A New York appeals court on Monday agreed to hold off collection of former President Donald Trump's more than \$454 million civil fraud judgment if he puts up \$175 million within 10 days. If Trump does, it will stop the clock on collection and prevent the state from seizing the presumptive Republican presidential nominee's assets while he appeals. The appeals court also halted other aspects of a trial judge's ruling that had barred Trump and his sons Eric Trump and Donald Trump Jr., the family company's executive vice presidents, from serving in corporate leadership for several years. In all, the order was a significant victory for the Republican ex-president as he defends the real estate empire that vaulted him into public life. The development came just before New York Attorney General Letitia James, a

Democrat, was expected to initiate efforts to collect the judgment. Trump, who was attending a separate hearing in his criminal hush money case in New York, hailed the ruling and said he would post a bond, securities or cash to cover the \$175 million sum in the civil case. Speaking in a courthouse hallway, Trump revisited his oft-stated complaints about civil trial Judge Arthur Engoron and the penalty he imposed.

New York City to send 800 more officers to police subway fare-beating

NEW YORK (AP)—New York City plans to intensify a crackdown on subway fare-beating by sending at least 800 police officers specifically to keep watch on turnstiles, officials announced Monday. It's the latest in a string of recent moves to address concerns about safety and unruliness in the nation's busiest subway system. Hours after the announcement, a person was shoved onto the tracks in East Harlem as a train was approaching the station. The train could not stop and the person was struck and was pronounced dead at the scene, the New York Police Department said. A 45-year-old man was taken into custody. NYPD said the incident was unprovoked. The NYPD said earlier Monday it plans to deploy hundreds of uniformed and plainclothes officers this week to deter fare evasion.

Imprisoned ex-Ohio Speaker Householder indicted on 10 new charges, 1 bars him from public office

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—Imprisoned ex-Ohio House Speaker Larry Householder was indicted Monday on 10 new felony counts, including one that would ban him from ever holding public office in the state again. The fresh indictments brought by the state extend action in what was already the largest corruption case in state history. The 64-year-old Householder was convicted of racketeering in June for his role orchestrating a \$60 million bribery scheme funded by Akron-based First Energy Corp. in exchange for passage of a \$1 billion bailout of two nuclear plants owned by one of its subsidiaries. He was sentenced to 20 years, which he's serving at Elkton Federal Correctional Institution near Youngstown, and has appealed. On Monday, a Cuyahoga County grand jury indicted Householder on the additional charges, which include alleged misuse of cam-

paign funds, ethics violations and a theft in office charge that would block him from working for the government.

US and Israeli defense chiefs to meet Tuesday as tensions rise over Gaza

WASHINGTON (AP)—Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin will meet with Israel's minister of defense on Tuesday and discuss ways to defeat Hamas other than conducting a ground invasion of the southern Gaza city of Rafah, the Pentagon said, at a time of rising tensions between the two countries. Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, Pentagon press secretary, told reporters Monday that Austin's planned morning meeting with Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant is still on, even though Israel abruptly canceled the visit of a high-level delegation to Washington this week. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu canceled the visit in protest over Monday's U.N. Security Council decision calling for an immediate cease-fire. The U.S. abstained, deciding not to use its veto power, and the resolution passed 14-0. "There are ways to go about addressing the threat of Hamas, while also taking into account civilian safety. A lot of those are from lessons, our own lessons, conducting operations in urban environments," Ryder said. "I would expect the conversations to cover those kinds of things." Israel says it cannot defeat Hamas without going into Rafah, where it says the group has four battalions composed of thousands of fighters.

Powerball jackpot climbs to \$865 million as long winless drought continues

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—The Powerball jackpot increased to an estimated \$865 million after no one won Monday night's drawing, continuing a winless streak that dates to New Year's Day. The numbers drawn were: 7, 11, 19, 53 68 and red ball: 23. Since the last winner on Jan. 1, there have been 36 straight drawings without a big winner. It's tough to win the Powerball jackpot because the odds are so long, at 1 in 292.2 million. The top prize up for grabs Monday night was for an estimated \$800 million. The \$865 million prize on the line for the next drawing Wednesday night is for a sole winner who is paid through an annuity, with an initial payment and then 29 annual payments. Most winners choose a cash payout, which for Wednesday night's drawing would be an estimated \$416 million.

Asia

IN LATEST BREAK FROM PACIFIST PRINCIPLES

Japan to sell fighter jets to others

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's Cabinet on Tuesday approved a plan to sell future next-generation fighter jets that it's developing with Britain and Italy to other countries, in the latest move away from the country's post-war pacifist principles.

The contentious decision to allow international arms sales is expected to help secure Japan's role in the joint fighter jet project and part of a move to build up the Japanese arms industry and bolster its role in global security.

The Cabinet also endorsed a revision to Japan's arms equipment and technology transfer guidelines to allow coproduced lethal weapons to be sold to countries other than the partners.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi said the changes are necessary given Japan's security environment, but stressed that Japan's pacifist principles remain unchanged.

"In order to achieve a fighter aircraft that meets the necessary performance and to avoid

jeopardizing the defense of Japan, it is necessary to transfer finished products from Japan to countries other than partner countries," Hayashi told reporters, adding that Tokyo will follow a strict approval process for jet sales. "We have clearly demonstrated that we will continue to adhere to our basic philosophy as a peaceful nation," he said.

Japan has long restricted arms exports under the country's pacifist constitution, but has rapidly taken steps to deregulate amid rising regional and global tensions, especially from nearby China.

The decision on jets will allow Japan to export lethal weapons it coproduces to other countries for the first time.

Japan is working with Italy and the U.K. to develop an advanced fighter jet to replace its aging fleet of American-designed F-2 fighters, and the Eurofighter Typhoons used by the U.K. and Italian militaries.

Japan, which was previously working on a homegrown de-

sign to be called the F-X, agreed in December 2022 to merge its effort with a British-Italian program called the Tempest. for deployment in 2035. The joint project, known as the Global Combat Air Program or GCAP, is based in the U.K.

Japan hopes the new plane will offer advanced capabilities Japan needs amid growing tensions in the region, giving it a technological edge against regional rivals China and Russia.

Because of its wartime past as aggressor and the devastation that followed its defeat in World War II, Japan adopted a constitution that limits its military to self-defense. The country long maintained a strict policy to limit transfers of military equipment and technology and ban all exports of lethal weapons.

Opponents have criticized Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government for committing to the fighter jet project without providing an explanation to the public or seeking approval for the major policy change.

Philippines lodges its 'strongest protest' against China over water cannon assault in disputed sea

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines lodged its "strongest protest" against Beijing on Monday and summoned a senior Chinese diplomat over a water cannon assault by the Chinese coast guard that injured Filipino navy crew members and heavily damaged their boat in the disputed South China Sea, officials said.

In response, China warned that relations were at a crossroads and the Philippines should choose a prudent path forward.

Two Chinese coast guard ships hit a Philippine navy-operated supply boat with water cannons Saturday in the latest

and most serious confrontation between the rival Asian claimants near the disputed Second Thomas Shoal, which is surrounded by Chinese vessels in a bid to dislodge Philippine forces from there.

The repeated high-seas confrontations since last year have sparked fears of a larger conflict that could put China and the United States on a collision course. The U.S. has warned repeatedly that it's obligated to defend the Philippines—its oldest treaty ally in Asia—if Filipino forces, ships or aircraft come under an armed attack, includ-

ing in the South China Sea.

The United States, the European Union, Japan, Australia and about 16 other countries have expressed support to the Philippines and the rule of law, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila.

China accused Philippine vessels of "intruding" into Chinese waters. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said that the actions of the Chinese coast guard were "legitimate, professional and restrained" and that China would "continue to take resolute measures to safeguard its territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests."

NZ says it was targeted by China-backed cyberespionage

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Hackers linked to the Chinese government launched a state-sponsored operation that targeted New Zealand's Parliament in 2021, the country's security minister said on Tuesday.

New Zealand's allegation comes a day after American and British authorities announced a set of criminal charges and sanctions against seven hackers, all believed to be living in China, who targeted U.S. officials, journalists, corporations, pro-democracy activists and the U.K.'s election watchdog.

"The use of cyber-enabled

espionage operations to interfere with democratic institutions and processes anywhere is unacceptable," Minister Responsible for the Government Communications Security Bureau Judith Collins said in a media statement.

Collins said the agency had also established links between a state-sponsored actor linked to China and malicious cyber activity targeting parliamentary entities in New Zealand.

"The GCSB's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) completed a robust technical assessment following a compromise of the Parliamentary

Counsel Office and the Parliamentary Service in 2021, and has attributed this activity to a PRC (China) state-sponsored group known as APT40," Collins says.

"Fortunately, in this instance, the NCSC worked with the impacted organizations to contain the activity and remove the actor shortly after they were able to access the network."

Collins said New Zealand will not follow the U.S. and U.K. in sanctioning China as New Zealand does not have a law allowing such penalties, nor were there plans to introduce legislation.

World

RUSSIA STEPS UP TARGETING OF UKRAINIAN CITIES

Kyiv endures 3rd shelling in 5 days



Ukrainian military experts gather remains of a missile next to a destroyed building in the Pecherskyi district, after a Russian air attack in Kyiv, Ukraine, Monday March 25, 2024.

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Russia launched missiles against Kyiv for the third time in five days and also targeted other regions Monday as Moscow escalated its aerial bombardment of Ukrainian cities while the front line in the war remains largely stationary.

Nine people were injured in the morning strike on the Ukrainian capital, the Ukraine Rescue Service said. The Pecherskyi district was the hardest hit. Missile debris damaged homes in two districts and a local college gym in another district, Ukraine's National Police said.

Russia fired two ballistic missiles at Kyiv from occu-

pied Crimea in the daylight attack, but both were intercepted above the city, said Serhii Popko, head of the Kyiv City Military Administration.

Later in the day, Ukrainian news outlets reported at least two explosions in the southern city of Odesa as Russian missile strikes also targeted several other regions. There was no immediate word on injuries or damage there.

On Thursday, Russia attacked Kyiv for the first time in six weeks, firing more than two dozen missiles before dawn. On Friday, Russia unleashed a massive attack against Ukraine's energy sector, calling the assault re-

taliation for recent strikes on Russian soil.

Days of intense Ukrainian shelling of the Russian border region of Belgorod led Russia to announce plans to evacuate about 9,000 children.

The bombardment of Kyiv also came three days after a concert hall attack in Russia killed more than 130 people. Russian President Vladimir Putin sought to tie the attack to Ukraine, even though an affiliate of the Islamic State group claimed responsibility.

Putin could use the Moscow attack to shore up support for the war and as a pretext to escalate attacks on Ukraine, analysts said.

UN demand for Gaza cease-fire stirs strongest clash between US and Israel since war began

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The United Nations Security Council on Monday issued its first demand for a cease-fire in Gaza, with the U.S. angering Israel by abstaining from the vote. Israel responded by canceling a visit to Washington by a high-level delegation in the strongest public clash between the allies since the war began.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused the U.S. of "retreating" from a "principled position" by allowing the vote

to pass without conditioning the cease-fire on the release of hostages held by Hamas.

White House national security spokesman John Kirby said the administration was "kind of perplexed" by Netanyahu's decision. He said the Israelis were "choosing to create a perception of daylight here when they don't need to do that."

Kirby and the American ambassador to the U.N. said the U.S. abstained because the

resolution did not condemn Hamas. U.S. officials chose to abstain rather than veto the proposal "because it does fairly reflect our view that a cease-fire and the release of hostages come together," Kirby said.

The 15-member council voted 14-0 to approve the resolution, which also demanded the release of all hostages taken captive during Hamas' Oct. 7 surprise attack in southern Israel. The chamber broke into loud applause after the vote.

Puerto Rico has declared an epidemic following an increase in dengue cases

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—Puerto Rico's health secretary declared an epidemic on Monday following a spike in dengue cases.

The U.S. territory of 3.2 million people has reported at least 549 cases so far this year, compared with a total of 1,293 cases for all of last year. The majority of cases have been reported in the

capital of San Juan.

More than 340 people have been hospitalized for the mosquito-borne virus, according to the island's health department.

Puerto Rico last declared a dengue epidemic in 2012.

More than 5 million dengue cases were reported worldwide last year, with nearly 80% of them occurring in the Western

Hemisphere, according the World Health Organization. The region has reported some 3 million cases so far this year, with health officials noting that higher rainfall along with humidity and heat linked to climate change have contributed to a rise in cases.

The virus can cause crushing headaches, fever, vomiting, a rash and other symptoms. While most infected people don't get symptoms, severe cases can lead to plasma leakage and death.

Life & Style

Feds search Sean 'Diddy' Combs' properties as part of sex trafficking probe

NEW YORK (AP)—Two properties belonging to music mogul Sean “Diddy” Combs in Los Angeles and Miami were searched Monday by federal Homeland Security Investigations agents and other law enforcement as part of an ongoing sex trafficking investigation by federal authorities in New York, two law enforcement officials told The Associated Press.

It’s not clear whether Combs was the target of the investigation. The officials were not authorized to publicly discuss details of the investigation and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

In a statement, Homeland Security Investigations said it “executed law enforcement actions as part of an ongoing investigation, with assistance from HSI Los Angeles, HSI Miami, and our local law enforcement partners.”

A spokesperson for the U.S. attorney’s office in Manhattan declined to comment.

Messages to Combs’ lawyers and other representatives seeking comment were not immediately returned.

A police line was set up around the Los Angeles house in the wealthy Holmby Hills neighborhood near Beverly Hills. Helicopter video from KABC-TV showed a group of agents with vests that indicated they were from Homeland Security Investigations gathered in the home’s backyard near the pool. A command post was set up outside the house and agents were still entering and leaving hours after the search began.

There have been sev-



A law enforcement agent carries a bag of evidence to a van as federal agents stand at the entrance to a property belonging to rapper Sean “Diddy” Combs, Monday, March 25, 2024, on Star Island in Miami Beach, Fla.

eral sexual assault lawsuits filed against Combs in recent months.

In February a music producer filed a lawsuit alleging Combs coerced him to solicit prostitutes and pressured him to have sex with them. Combs’ attorney Shawn Holley has said of those allegations that “we have overwhelming, indisputable proof that his claims are complete lies.”

Combs’ former protege and girlfriend, the R&B singer Cassie, sued him in November alleging years of sexual abuse, including rape. The lawsuit said he forced her to have sex with male prostitutes while he filmed them. The suit was settled the day after it was filed.

Another of Combs’ accusers was a woman who said the rap producer raped her two

decades ago when she was 17.

The Associated Press does not typically name people who say they have been sexually abused unless they

come forward publicly as Cassie did.

Combs had said in a December statement, “I did not do any of the awful

things being alleged.”

Douglas Wigdor, an attorney who represents Cassie and another woman who sued Combs, said in a state-

ment Monday, “Hopefully, this is the beginning of a process that will hold Mr. Combs responsible for his depraved conduct.”

It is not clear whether the search is related to any of the allegations raised in the lawsuits.

Combs is among the most influential hip-hop producers and executives of the past three decades. Formerly known as Puff Daddy, he built one of hip-hop’s biggest empires, blazing a trail with several entities attached to his famous name. He is the founder of Bad Boy Records and a three-time Grammy winner who has worked with a slew of top-tier artists including Notorious B.I.G., Mary J. Blige, Usher, Lil Kim, Faith Evans and 112.

Combs created the fashion clothing line Sean John, launched the Revolt TV channel with a focus on music, and produced the reality show “Making the Band” for MTV.

MSNBC personalities object to NBC News’ hiring of Ronna McDaniel

NEW YORK (AP)—The internal furor over NBC News’ decision to hire former Republican National Committee head Ronna McDaniel as a paid contributor spread Monday, with MSNBC personalities Rachel Maddow, Jen Psaki, Nicolle Wallace, Lawrence O’Donnell and Joe Scarborough all using their shows to publicly object.

Maddow, MSNBC’s most popular personality, compared it to putting a mobster to work in a district attorney’s office.

“I find the decision to put

her on the payroll inexplicable and I hope they will reconsider that decision,” she said on her weekly program Monday night.

There was no immediate comment on Monday from NBC News or McDaniel about the extraordinary public revolt against network management that began with former “Meet the Press” moderator Chuck Todd a day earlier. Todd said that many NBC News journalists were uncomfortable with the hiring because of McDaniel’s “gaslighting”

and “character assassination” while at the RNC.

McDaniel was hired quickly after leaving the RNC.

The network announced McDaniel’s hiring on Friday, two weeks after she stepped down as the RNC leader, saying McDaniel would add to NBC News’ coverage with an insider’s perspective on national politics and the future of the Republican Party.

Maddow said she’d been told that MSNBC management had signed off on the hiring, but that when staff “expressed

outrage,” it was made clear that McDaniel would not appear on the cable network, which appeals primarily to liberal viewers. Since then, she said there’s been an effort in other parts of the company to “muddy that up in the press” and make it seem like that’s not what happened.

“I can assure you, that is what happened at MSNBC,” she said.

Maddow told her viewers—and presumably her bosses—that “it is a sign of strength, not weakness, to acknowledge that you’re wrong.”

Son’s new playmate resides in a home with sex offender

DEAR ABBY: We recently moved to a new neighborhood. My 8-year-old son, “Joey,” has become best friends with a classmate, “Paul,” who lives on our street. We know from research we did when we bought our house that Paul’s stepfather, with whom he lives, is a sex offender who committed crimes against children and served time in prison.

Paul has been coming to our house most days, which is fine. However, both Paul and Joey have started asking whether Joey can go play at Paul’s house. I will never allow my son to play there. At some point, the boys will want an explanation, but I don’t think Paul knows about his stepfather’s past, and I don’t think Paul’s mother knows that I know.

If I tell Joey an age-appropriate version of the truth, I am sure he will tell Paul. I don’t think this is how Paul should hear about his stepfather’s past, plus I am concerned it might cause Paul’s mother to get upset and cut off the kids’ friendship. Do you have any advice?

CONFLICTED IN THE WEST

DEAR CONFLICTED: Are you absolutely certain that you have the story right and Paul’s stepdad is a registered sex offender? I ask because I’m surprised that he would be allowed to live in a household with a minor child.

Your concern that Joey might tell Paul about his stepfa-

ther is laudable. A way to handle it would be to continue insisting that the boys play only at your house. I do think you should discuss this with Paul’s mother so you know for sure this is what you are dealing with. If it is true, for the next few years use the old, “Because I’m your mother and I said so!” when Joey asks to visit Paul. Eventually, the truth is going to come out, but Paul should hear it from his mother.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I’ve been married for eight years. I love my wife with my heart and soul. The problem is, although I’m in love with her, I still love my ex-wife. I never actually expressed these feelings toward my ex until recently. I write to her and call her, hoping she will answer. I don’t want to leave my wife because she’s a good woman. But so was my ex. What can I do?

Every time my wife and I have a disagreement, I start thinking about my ex and what life would’ve been like if I had stayed with her. I find myself thinking about her more and more often each day. I know my ex still loves me, although she won’t come out and say it. Is it OK to be in love with one and still love the other?

LOTS OF LOVE IN FLORIDA

DEAR LOTS: May I inject a sliver of reality into your fantasy? You say you “know” your ex-wife still loves you although she won’t come out and say it, nor does she an-

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



swer your passionate letters. I’d say her refusal to communicate sends a pretty strong message that she doesn’t feel the way you do.

I don’t know what is wrong in your current marriage, but if you don’t stop pining over the wife you dumped, you are going to lose this one, too. Counseling may help you accomplish this, and it is what I strongly recommend. Start now.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

WHEN IT SNOWS, YOU CAN GO SLEDGING. WHEN IT'S WINDY, YOU CAN FLY KITES. WHEN IT'S HOT, YOU CAN GO SWIMMING.



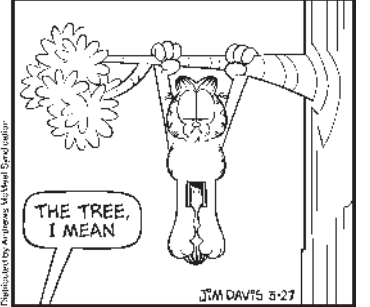
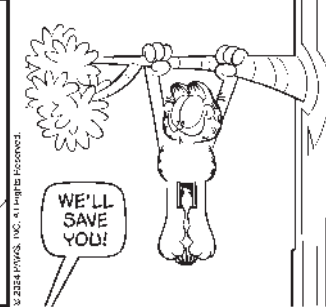
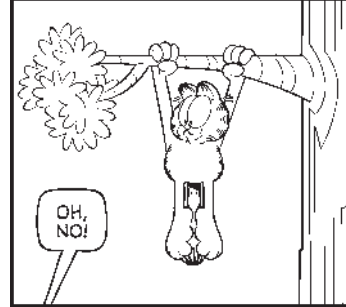
...THE ONLY SPORT IS DRIVING MOM CRAZY.



WATSON 3-27

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



JIM DAVIS 3-27

Adam@home

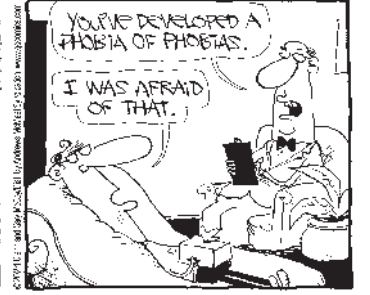
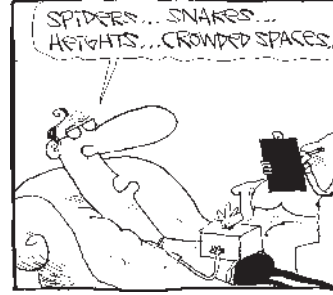
By Bryan Basset



3-27

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



3-27

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Play part
4 Quick look
8 Carpet type
12 When doubled, it's a dance
13 Pond growth
14 Lighten
15 Author Fleming
16 "For good reason!"
18 Finger or toe
20 Auction signal
21 "Arrivederci!"
24 Jabs
28 "Really?"
32 Actress Sorvino
33 Mal de —
34 Library transactions
36 Label
37 Landed
39 "Uh, probably"
41 "It's a Wonderful Life" director

DOWN

1 Battery fluid
2 Spiced tea
3 Tart flavor
4 Incomplete
5 Yale grad
6 Custard ingredient
7 Madeline of
8 Not often
9 Dinner for
10 Ninny
11 Logical leader?
17 Surpass
19 German pronoun
22 Yours (Fr.)
23 Orange variety
25 Young foxes
26 Historic periods
27 Palm starch
28 Computer debut of 1998
29 Actress Ward
30 Journey
31 Burden
35 Place
38 Plod
40 Briny expanse
42 Actress Adams
45 Couch
47 Vats
48 Military group
49 Cattle calls?
50 QB's goals
51 British singer Rita
52 Long. crosser
53 Einstein's birthplace
54 Observe

Solution time: 23 mins.

S	I	P	S	M	F	I	D	G	A	P
S	C	O	W	I	L	I	E	O	L	E
S	U	P	E	R	S	I	Z	E	O	A
				D	O	T	E	P	O	D
M	U	S	E	D				U	S	E
A	R	K	S		S	U	P	E	R	E
C	D	I		G	E	N	O	A		N
S	U	P	E	R	M	A	N		I	S
A	C	A	I		D	O	E	R	S	
A	L	I	O	S		A	I	L	W	
M	E	R		S	U	P	E	R	E	I
I	D	O		C	R	A	T		L	O
D	A	L		S	I	R	E		S	I

Yesterday's answer 3-27

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13				14			
15			16				17			
18			19				20			
		21		22	23		24		25	26
28	29	30				31		32		
33			34			35		36		
37			38		39		40			
41			42		43					
		44		45		46		47	48	49
50	51	52			53	54		55		
56				57				58		
59				60				61		

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Fergie, 49; Nathan Fillion, 53; Mariah Carey, 55; Pauley Perrette, 55.

Happy Birthday: Be proactive when dealing with institutions and maintaining up-to-date personal information. Peace of mind will be your ticket to come and go as you please with the least stress. Take time to reinforce your connections with people who matter to you personally and professionally. It's time to tidy up loose ends and reassemble your thoughts and long-term plans. Your numbers are 4, 15, 23, 28, 34, 42, 44.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): A change to how you handle your cash will make a difference. Put together a savings plan and incorporate it into your daily routine. Consider what makes you happy. You'll find places where you can cut corners and save. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Settle matters in your head before sharing your thoughts. Don't shy away from change if exploring possibilities will lead to unusual connections and opportunities. Take advantage of what's available and see where it leads. Expect to be surprised by what you discover. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Stay alert and fit. You'll need to compensate for mistakes and other people's actions. Listen carefully and offer alternatives in a persuasive and complimentary manner to avoid a negative response. Gather information before agreeing to participate. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Explore the possibilities. Take what you know to the next level. Refuse to let anyone stifle your dreams or push you in a direction that doesn't cap-

tivate your interest. Expand your circle of friends and put peace and love on your wish list. *****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You may know what you want, but it will only be possible to meet your expectations with the right connections. Rethink your objective and go back to the drawing board. Gathering the latest information will give you the necessary insight to reach your destination. **

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A steady pace will win. Don't let anyone jeopardize your chance to be happy. If someone tries to push you in a different direction, gravitate toward those heading down the same path as you. A partnership will make you aware of possibilities. *****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Pay attention to your environment and how functional your space is before you start something new. A change that makes your life convenient and cost-efficient will help ease stress. Consider selling what you no longer use. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Socialize, mix business with pleasure and connect with people who spark your imagination and give you a different perspective regarding what's possible. Personal growth, physical improvements and updating your lifestyle are favored. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't act prematurely. Be resourceful and distinguish yourself as an expert before presenting your point of view. Reconfigure how you run your household in order to fit your budget and address what concerns you most. Refuse to let anyone disrupt your plans. *****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You have more going for you than you realize. Someone will twist your words or offer false information to control a situation or decision. Trust in yourself and your ability to get things done your way, on time and without going over budget. **

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Pay attention to your cash flow, and don't let emotional spending or trying to buy someone's vote of confidence leave you without money. Travel and communication will lead to setbacks and require intelligent maneuvers to stay on track. *****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Set your sights on having a good time. Use your talents and intuition to win approval and inside information. A chance to get ahead financially is in the stars. Revamp your routine and consider a joint venture or sharing expenses with someone to cut your costs. ***

Birthday Baby: You are persuasive, opportunity-driven and innovative. You are guarded and considerate.

☾: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼: Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

7	6							1
5	3							2
	1		3	8				6
6	4						1	3
				1				5
	1		6	2		7		4
1	3	7			9		2	8
			2		1	6	3	
2	6				4	1		

Difficulty: ★★★

3/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	4	9	7	3	8	2	1	6
3	7	6	1	4	2	5	9	8
1	8	2	9	5	6	7	3	4
6	9	7	8	2	3	1	4	5
2	1	8	5	9	4	3	6	7
4	5	3	6	1	7	9	8	2
7	3	4	2	6	1	8	5	9
9	2	1	4	8	5	6	7	3
8	6	5	3	7	9	4	2	1

Difficulty: ★★

7/26

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them. Circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

ROUTINE TRAFFIC STOPS

Solution: 9 letters

R D R K R V P U L L O V E R S
E E E S E A T B E L T I E I P
G S T R K Y D O L A N P R A A
I I U E I C S I T R O E T M S
S G P O M A E I O R N R U O S
T N M R F O P H P S O D R V E
R O O O F F D M C L I I N E N
A I C N T E I E I I C S G O G
T T O I E S L C E P I P N U E
I C E M E L E O E P P A I R
O A I N P L N R N R S T D P S
N R I H A N D S R Y U C E M T
C F O W D L E I Y A S H E E O
I N S U R A N C E K R A P N P
E I N V E S T I G A T E S T E

© 2024 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com

3/27

Arrest, Cellphone, Checks, Computer, Crime, Dispatch, Equipment, Felony, Fines, Hands, Horn, Impaired, Improper, Infraction, Insurance, Investigate, Keys, Lane, Laws, Minor, Move, Officer, Park, Passengers, Patrol, Pull Over, Radio, Registration, Scene, Seat Belt, Sign, Sirens, Slip, Speeding, Speedometer, Stop, Suspicion, Turn, Yield
Yesterday's Answer: Karlaftis

The NEW Wonderword Grand Millennium #1 in LARGE PRINT is now available at: www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Hawks rally from 30 points down to stun NBA-leading Celtics



ATLANTA (AP)—De'Andre Hunter could've held the ball and forced the Celtics to foul.

Instead, he let it fly. Considering what the Atlanta Hawks had done, rallying from a 30-point deficit against NBA-leading Boston, it was only appropriate the shot hit nothing but net.

Hunter scored 24 points, including a clinching 3-pointer with 9.2 seconds remaining, and the patched-together Hawks pulled off one of the most improbable wins in franchise history with a 120-118 stunner over the Celtics on Monday night.

The Celtics had won 20 of 22 and brought a nine-game winning streak into State Farm Arena - a run that certainly appeared in no jeopardy when Al Horford's 3-pointer put Boston up 68-38 with just under 4 1/2 minutes left in the first half.

But the Hawks, clinging to the final play-in spot in the East and one of the league's most disappointing teams, launched a comeback out of nowhere with All-Star guard Trae Young and three other key players sidelined by injuries.

It was the biggest comeback win for Atlanta since at least the 1997-98 season, when the NBA began keeping detailed play-by-play.

Dejounte Murray put the Hawks ahead to stay at 117-116 on a reverse layup with a minute left. Jaylen Brown missed a desperation 3 with the shot clock expiring, and Hunter sealed things at the other end with a huge assist from Clint Capela.

After Murray missed a jumper, Capela grabbed the offensive rebound and spotted Hunter all alone at the top of the key. Even though the shot clock was off and Hunter could've forced the Celtics to foul, he let go an open look from 26 feet.

Hunter had run through the scenario before he got the ball.

"If he passes it to me, I'm shooting," Hunter told himself. "He got the rebound, he passed it to me, so I shot it."

Hawks coach Quin Snyder had no problem with the seemingly ill-advised decision.

"He didn't hesitate," Snyder said. "He shot the ball with confidence, and I had confidence in him."

It was a shocking loss for the Celtics in a season filled with wins, to a team that came into the night trailing them by 25 1/2 games in the Eastern Conference standings.

"We let our foot off the gas in the second half, and they got in a great rhythm," said Jayson Tatum, who led the Celtics with 37 points. "It's a tough pill to swallow."

Atlanta's comeback began with a 9-0 run to end the first half, which cut the deficit to 74-56 as the teams headed to the locker room.

The momentum carried over to the third quarter, which be-



AP
Atlanta Hawks forward De'Andre Hunter (12) reacts after hitting a three-point basket late in the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Boston Celtics Monday, March 25, 2024, in Atlanta.

gan with Atlanta ripping off 19 of the next 23 points to slice the margin to 78-75.

After the Celtics flirted several times with pulling away again, the Hawks finally claimed their first lead of the night when little-used Wesley Matthews knocked down a 3 to make it 97-96 with 9:42 remaining.

Bogdan Bogdanovic had 22 points and Murray chipped in with 19, but it was several players who are normally buried deep on the bench who really carried the Hawks.

Vit Krejci had 16 points, including a 3-pointer that left him shrugging his shoulders toward his teammates as if he couldn't really believe what was happening. Bruno Fernando scored 13 and Matthews knocked down a pair of crucial 3s.

"It felt like everything we were doing was going (right) for us," Krejci said. "It was a really good moment. We've got to find a way to feel that way the whole game."

With plenty of fans in green cheering them on in Atlanta, the Celtics doubled up the home team in the first quarter by racing to a 44-22 lead.

Boston made 16 of 24 shots in the opening period, including 5 of 7 beyond the 3-point arc, in addition to going 7 of 7 at the foul line.

Tatum finished the half with 23 points, four rebounds, four assists, two steals and a blocked shot. But he was stymied a bit in the second half by Krejci, who began to pick up the Boston star from one end of the court to the other.

Brown added 24 points for the Celtics.

KNICKS 124, PISTONS 99

NEW YORK (AP)—Donte DiVincenzo made a franchise-record 11 3-pointers and scored a career-best 40 points, leading New York to a rout of Detroit.

DiVincenzo broke the Knicks' single-game record of 10 that was held by J.R.

Smith and Evan Fournier and moved into third in the NBA in 3-pointers made this season. He would have had one more, but one of his 3s in the third quarter was later overturned because he had first stepped out of bounds.

But the swingman stayed in the blowout long enough to get the record-setter with 3:16 remaining, then checked out shortly after to an ovation.

Jalen Brunson added 28 points, and Josh Hart had 11 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists in his sixth triple-double this season. The Knicks won for the sixth time in seven games and remained a half-game behind Cleveland for third place in the Eastern Conference.

Marcus Sasser scored 24 points for the NBA-worst Pistons, who lost their seventh straight and fell to 12-60. They were without top player Cade Cunningham, along with Jalen Duren, Ausar Thompson, Simone Fontecchio, and Isaiah Stewart because of injuries.

CAVALIERS 115, HORNETS 92

CLEVELAND (AP)—Evan Mobley scored 17 points, Jarrett Allen added 17 and 13 rebounds and the Cleveland Cavaliers bounced back from an embarrassing loss at Miami 24 hours earlier by beating the Charlotte Hornets 115-92 on Monday night.

Mobley also had a career-high eight assists and seven rebounds in only 25 minutes. It was his second game back after he was sidelined for nine by a sprained ankle.

The Cavs were blown out by 37 on Sunday by the Heat, who were up 45 at one point. The loss seemed to be rock bottom for a tired Cleveland team dealing with injuries and sliding backward in the Eastern Conference standings.

But a matchup against the struggling Hornets was just what the Cavs needed to stop a three-game losing streak.

Georges Niang made five

3-pointers and scored 17 for Cleveland, which had lost six of eight and came in just four games clear of a play-in spot after being among the East's top teams for months.

Brandon Miller scored 24 points and Miles Bridges had 13 for Charlotte. The 17-win Hornets have dropped five straight and 12 of 14.

NETS 96, RAPTORS 88

TORONTO (AP)—Dennis Schroder scored 19 points against his former team, Trendon Watford had 11 of his season-high 19 points in the second quarter and Brooklyn snapped a six-game losing streak by beating the short-handed Toronto Raptors.

Mikal Bridges scored 13 points and Jalen Wilson added 12 as the Nets won for the first time since March 10 at Cleveland.

Gary Trent Jr. scored 18 points and Javon Freeman-Liberty had 15 for Toronto. The Raptors have lost 11 straight and are winless since a home victory over Charlotte on March 3.

SPURS 104, SUNS 102

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Jeremy Sochan hit a key 3-pointer in the final minute and finished with 26 points and a career-high 18 rebounds as San Antonio beat the Phoenix Suns with Spurs rookie Victor Wembanyama sidelined due to injury.

Devin Vassell added 26 points for San Antonio and celebrated the victory by yelling into the house microphone after the game: "That's a big win. That's a big win."

Devin Booker scored 36 points and Kevin Durant added 29 as Phoenix split a two-game set in San Antonio.

ROCKETS 110, TRAIL BLAZERS 92

HOUSTON (AP)—Jalen Green scored 27 points to lead Houston to a win over Portland.

At 36-35, Houston is now

just a half game behind Golden State for the final spot in the NBA Play-In Tournament.

Green entered Monday tied for fourth in the NBA in scoring in March with 27.8 points per game on 51.4% shooting. Against Portland, he made 9 of 26 shots, including 4 of 12 from 3.

Rockets forward Jabari Smith Jr. was out, serving a one-game suspension for his Saturday night fight with Jazz guard Kris Dunn. In his place, Jock Landale had a season-high 17 points and added nine rebounds.

Dalano Banton led the Blazers with 28 points and 11 rebounds off the bench, while Scoot Henderson added 15 points.

WIZARDS 107, BULLS 105

CHICAGO (AP)—Jordan Poole scored 23 points and Washington won their season-high third straight game, beating the Chicago Bulls.

Corey Kispert added 19 points and 12 rebounds. Marvin Bagley III scored 16 and the Wizards—owners of the NBA's second-worst record—got some payback for a 29-point blowout in Chicago last week.

DeMar DeRozan led Chicago with 27 points. Coby White scored 22 as the Bulls lost their third in a row.

MAVERICKS 115, JAZZ 105

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Luka Doncic had 29 points, 13 assists, and 12 rebounds, and Dallas beat Utah.

Kyrie Irving scored 27 points for the Mavericks, who earned their fourth consecutive victory. P.J. Washington had 16 points, and Daniel Gafford finished with 13 points and 10 rebounds.

Lauri Markkanen made six 3-pointers and scored 34 points for Utah. Markkanen ranks third among NBA 7-footers with 1,001 made

3-pointers for his career in his seventh season.

NUGGETS 128, GRIZZLIES 103

DENVER (AP)—Nikola Jokic had 29 points, 11 rebounds and eight assists, Christian Braun scored 17 points and Denver beat Memphis.

Jokic, who left the game with 27 seconds remaining in the third quarter and Denver leading by 21 points, finished two assists shy of his 23rd triple-double of the season.

Lamar Stevens matched a season-high with 19 points for the Grizzlies. Scotty Pippen Jr. added 17.

KINGS 108, 76ERS 96

SACRAMENTO (AP)—Domantas Sabonis had his NBA-leading 25th triple-double of the season on a milestone night, leading Sacramento to a victory over Philadelphia.

Sabonis had 11 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists to become the fifth player in NBA history with at least 25 triple-doubles in a season, joining Nikola Jokic, Russell Westbrook, Wilt Chamberlain and Oscar Robertson.

Sabonis also posted his 54th consecutive double-double, breaking a tie with Kevin Love for the longest streak since the 1976-77 merger between the NBA and ABA. Sabonis is nowhere close to the all-time record of 227 straight double-doubles held by Chamberlain, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Keegan Murray and De'Aaron Fox each scored 23 points for the Kings, who snapped a 10-game skid against the Sixers to move into a tie for sixth place in the Western Conference with Dallas. Sacramento hosts the Mavericks on Tuesday night as the teams fight to remain in the top six and avoid the play-in tournament.

Tyrese Maxey scored 29 points to lead the Sixers, who wrapped up a 2-2 West Coast swing. Philadelphia dropped into eighth place in the Eastern Conference, a half-game behind idle Miami.

PACERS 133, CLIPPERS 116

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Pascal Siakam scored 31 points to lead Indiana to a win over the Los Angeles Clippers.

Myles Turner had 24 points and seven rebounds, helping the Pacers to their sixth win in their last seven road games. Tyrese Haliburton finished with 21 points and nine assists.

Los Angeles dropped its fifth consecutive home game. Kawhi Leonard and Paul George each scored 26 points for the Clippers, and Russell Westbrook had 14 points and seven assists in his return after missing 12 games because of a fractured left hand.

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT



OG Aces defeated Triple L/Tax Pro, 90-71, in

the continuation of the NMIBF Masters Preseason Basketball League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Triple L/Tax Pro put the first score on the board in the first two minutes of action, but their lead wouldn't last too long as the OG Aces shot in their first 2 points.

Their lead wouldn't last too long either because soon after Triple L/Tax Pro added 3 more points on the board. OG Aces then fired up the furnace to match their score.

Triple L/Tax Pro wouldn't remain dominant for long and as the game progressed their score didn't get far higher, as OG Aces kept a motivated defensive stance. With a minute left in the second quarter, the score was pegged at 18-10 with OG Aces in the lead.

With just seconds remaining on the clock OG Aces secured a 10-point advantage over their opponent.

Coming into the second quarter, OG Aces continued to thwart attempts from Triple L/Tax Pro and their sharpshooter Sonny Lerio who carried most of the team's offensive load.

Entering the fourth quarter, OG Aces was in complete control, 69-39. Triple L/Tax Pro, however, gassed up and began to hoop more with Lerio even connecting on three 3-pointers in a row.

But even after putting up a good fight, as the game clock wound down, players on each team began slowing down. Triple L/Tax Pro also seemed to accept the impending loss, as they didn't seem to mind defending OG Aces' drives to the hoop.

The Mutt-and-Jeff combination of Jawn Joyner and Mike Surima led the now 2-3 OG Aces with 26 and 22 points, respectively. Lerio, meanwhile, led all scorers

OG Aces defeat Triple L, 90-71



CHRYSTAL MARINO

The OG Aces players smile for a photo after they defeated the Triple L/Tax Pro in the NMIBF Masters Preseason Basketball League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

with 29 markers for the 1-4 Triple L/Tax Pro.

OG Aces 90 – Joyner 26, Surima 22, Natividad 18, Borja 7, Saures 6, Yarofir 6,

Albert 3, Rangamar 2.

Triple L/Tax Pro 71 – Lerio 29, Embile 10, Pineda 8, Laxamana 8, Usi 8, Dimafelix 8.

Scoring by quarters: 20-12, 46-27, 69-39, 90-71.

LAI

From page 16

tained an injury in the finals against Lai San.

"I popped my ankle which caused me severe pain in the second set of the match. I couldn't stand up at that time. I had to retire. I wish I could have finished the finals."

He went on to thank his finals opponent for taking him under his wing.

"I was really lucky and thankful to be able to play against such an amazing player like Heima in the finals. I

especially want to thank him that he plays practice matches with me whenever he visits Saipan. It really helped me to improve my game. I also like to say a big thank you to coach Jeff [Race], Bobby [Cruz], Colin [Ramsey], Tomas [Abel], the rest of the CNMI national team, and friends for all the support they have given me. I'll always appreciate it," Lam added.

Lai San advanced to the finals following a tough 7-5, 6-4 win over top seed Ramsey. He debuted with a 6-1, 6-0 victory over Henry Choi.

Lam punched his ticket to the championship round after turning back No. 2 Abel, 6-2, 6-0. He opened the tourney with a roller-coaster 4-6, 6-0, 10-6 triumph over third seed David Kwon.

In the men's singles 40, top seed Paul Jang upended Brian Wessel, 6-4, 7-5, in the finals. The former moved into the championship round with a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Fayce El Karaa. Wessel barged into the finals after upsetting No. 2 John Bradley, 6-0, 7-5.

In the men's doubles 40, Bong Gamab and Ed Javier

edged Ken Imaaya and Wessel via percentage points in the round-robin, 51.2%-50%. Gamab and Javier beat Imaaya and Wessel, 6-3, 6-4, but lost to Jeff Race and Bradley, 3-6, 6-7 (4). Imaaya and Wessel then took down Race and Bradley, 4-6, 7-5, 10-5.

Results of the women's doubles, women's doubles 35, and women's singles 35 of the Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association-organized 2024 Bridge Capital Tennis Classic will be published in tomorrow's issue of *Saipan Tribune*.

BIRTHDAY

From page 16

faluwash Golf Association family that has always been her biggest supporters aside from her family.

As for her best hole in the NMC Golf Open, Jin said it would have to be hole No. 12 on Day 1 on the west course and No. 3 on Day 2 on the east course.

"I had to take an unplayable ball because my tee shot ended up in front of the hazard. I saved par by making an amazing long putt. On the second day, my best hole was on No. 3 as I was able to save par from the trees left of the green."

Conversely, her worst hole of the two-round competition was hole No. 17 on the first day, which she doubled. "I got on the front tip of the green and four-putted to get to the hole cup on the opposite side."

Jin, who pocketed \$800 for her Ladies Open win, said she intends to save her winnings to pay for the entry fees of upcoming golf tournaments.

Second place and \$500 went



MARK RABAGO

From left, NMC Foundation member Roman Tudela, Guam Hotel and Restaurant Association president Mary Rhodes, Northern Marianas College regent Dr. Jesse Tudela, Ladies Open winner Zhimin Jin, NMC regent Zenie Mafnas, and NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero.

to Young Hee Yoo with her 162, while third place and \$300 cash prize was won by Meae Jeon who finished with a 167.

In the B Flight, Carl Hocog graduated to A Flight after winning the division with a two-day total of 163. Roland Merar then edged Danilo Ganacias for second place, 169-169.5.

Like the Ladies Open winners, first, second, and third placers in the B Flight went home with \$800, \$500, and \$300, respectively.

Results of the other divisions of the NMC Golf Open will be published in the next editions of the *Saipan Tribune*.

The NMC Golf Open, which

is also the signature event of the NMC Foundation, aims to raise funds to build and equip modern, innovative campus facilities that will help expand the CNMI's workforce development efforts, stimulate economic growth, and provide access to quality education for the residents of the CNMI.

SALCEDO

From page 16

was to have a strong mindset and to stay calm so I am able to play accurate shots. It worked well as me and my partner Kyle Salcedo won first for the U19 boys doubles."

Aside from Salcedo, Jimenez also dedicated their win to coaches Janelle Pangelinan, Ezekiel Macario, Nathan Guerrero, and Leonard Manuel, his girlfriend Vianca Mangulabnan as well as friends and family who have supported his badminton journey.

In boys U19 singles, Dizon defeated Ean Camacho in the finals, 21-18, 21-14.

Dizon topped Bracket 1, which had eight players, while Camacho ruled Bracket 2, which also had eight players. Salcedo then defeated his doubles teammate, Jimenez, 21-19, 18-21, 21-18, for third place.

"My strategy was placements. Placing my shots on my opponent's opening spots and targeting their weaknesses such as their backhand. I also tried to build long rallies to tire them out to set myself up to attack and get the next shots," said Dizon when asked what was his strategy going into the competition.

The 18-year-old MHS student then dedicated his boys U19 singles championship to his mother, who helps buy his

badminton gear.

In the U19 girls singles, Lina Tsukagoshi defeated Genelyn Lansangan in straight sets, 21-12, 21-18.

Tsukagoshi advanced to the finals by ruling Bracket 1. She beat Jessica Chen and Yi Lin Huang (twice). Lansangan, meanwhile, saw action in Bracket 2 and reached the finals after downing Barbara Wang. Lansangan defeated Elisha Henzon and Wang (twice) to move to the finals. Wang then topped Huang, 21-16, 21-15, for third place.

Shaina Malonzo and Charmaine Bautista, meanwhile, ruled the U19 girls doubles after a 21-20, 21-11 victory over Lansangan and Prapti Mondal. Shemariah Hicaro and Lallayne Torregosa then settled for third after losing to Modal and Lansangan in the loser's bracket semis, 21-18, 21-17.

In the U19 mixed doubles, Tsukagoshi won another title, this time teaming up with Bautista in defeating Malonzo and Brandon Manacop in the finals, 21-16, 21-18. Camacho and Mondal took third place after losing to Malonzo and Bautista in the loser's semis bracket, 18-21, 21-17, 16-21.

Results of the open division of the Northern Marianas Badminton Association-organized tournament will be published in the next edition of the *Saipan Tribune*.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kyle Salcedo, left, and Semantie Jimenez won U19 boys doubles title in last weekend's TanHoldings Badminton Open 2024.



Hawks rally from 30 points down to stun NBA-leading Celtics.

PAGE 14

Saipan Tribune Sports

OG Aces defeat Triple L, 90-71.

PAGE 15



16 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2024

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Lai San beats Lam in men's open finals



Heimanarii Lai San, right, poses with La Hunn Lam before their men's open finals in the 2024 Bridge Capital Tennis Classic last Saturday at the American Memorial Park.

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

Davis Cup campaigner and Tahiti national player Heimanarii Lai San won his very first championship in CNMI soil after defeating up-and-coming youngster La Hunn Lam in the finals of the 2024 Bridge Capital Tennis Classic men's open last Saturday at the American Memorial Park.

The 23-year-old former varsity tennis player of Division II Anderson University withstood Lam, 7-5, 4-2 (retired) after the latter rolled his ankle and wasn't able to continue.

"Playing on Saipan is always very enjoyable for me. The tennis community has always been very welcoming and I have made so many good friends over the years I have been visiting," said Lai San.

He also commended

14-year-old Lam for a very competitive finals until his unfortunate ankle accident.

"I think that he has a lot of potential and I think that his mindset is in the right place. He is well surrounded and has everything that he needs to be successful.

I wish him the very best and I am happy to help him whenever I am here on Saipan," said Lai San.

Lam, for his part, said it was really unfortunate that he sus-

See LAI on Page 15



Birthday girl Zhimin rules Ladies Open

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

Zhimin Jin, the 2022 Pacific Games gold medalist, gave herself a nifty birthday gift by winning the NMC Golf Open women's division last weekend at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

The 17-year-old Marianas High School student ruled the Ladies Open after shooting a two-round total of 160, firing an 83 on Day 1 last Saturday and a 77 on Day 2 last Sunday.

"The course was in a great condition. The greens were smooth and the fairways weren't too dry due to the rain. The weather was unexpected and was surprising to me as the wind started picking up and raining on Saturday. The tournament in general was well organized with great prizes, great volunteers, and I want to thank them for all their hard work," said Jin.

She then dedicated her Ladies Open victory to her parents, who never doubted her abilities and consistently supported her, even during her struggles.

"Their belief motivated

me to work harder and prove them right. This win was very meaningful to me as it is my first win in over a year. It also serves as my 17th birthday present as my birthday was coincidentally just the day before the tournament," she said.

See BIRTHDAY on Page 15



MARK RABAGO

Zhimin Jin won the Ladies Open of the NMC Golf Open last weekend at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

Salcedo, Jimenez smash into U19 doubles championship

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR



Kyle Salcedo and Sernantie Jimenez

reigned supreme in the U19 boys doubles of the TanHoldings Badminton Open 2024 held over the weekend at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Salcedo and Jimenez swept Sean Dizon and Brandon Manacop in the finals, 21-20, 21-18, to claim the title. Marlon Bautista and Dave Odicka completed the Top 3 in the single-bracket, double-elimination eight-team division.

Salcedo, a 17-year-old Marianas High School student, said



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kyle Salcedo, seen here reaching for the shuttle for a return to Lance Gallardo during their men's open singles semis game in the TanHoldings Badminton Open 2024 last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

constant communication was important in their victory in the U19 boys doubles.

"Communication is key which is true and works in any form or partnership or teamwork. Me and my partner's strategy was to play smart, attack when we can, and apply pressure from time to time. Be patient don't rush things and we try to communicate with each other which we did and it worked in our favor," said Salcedo, who dedicated the victory to his doubles partner.

Jimenez, 15 years old and also goes to MHS, said focus saved the day for him and his double teammate Salcedo.

"My strategy the whole game

See SALCEDO on Page 15